THE NEW
# INDIAN EXPRESS

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**Manufacturing cos log softer sales contraction**

Demand conditions in the manufacturing sector returned to the recovery mode with a softer contraction of 4.3% (Y-o-Y) in the second quarter of this fiscal in terms of nominal sales, after shrinking 41.1% in the previous quarter that was hit by countrywide lockdown due to Covid-19, according to RBI data. The recovery was led by iron and steel, food products, cement, automobile and pharmaceuticals companies, the data showed. **P12**

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Kiara Advani

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## भारतीय प्लाईवुड उद्योग अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण संस्थान
## INDIAN PLYWOOD INDUSTRIES RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE

(पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय का एक स्वायत्त निकाय, भारत सरकार)
(An Autonomous body of the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Govt. of India)
P.B. No.2273, (Behind to Peenya Metro Station), HMT Link Road, Off Tumkur Road,
P.O. Yeshwanthpur, Bengaluru-560 022. Ph.: 080-30534000, 30534001, 30534049, 28394231-32-33
Fax: 080-28396361/30534021, 28395970 E-mail: director@ipirti.gov.in, contactus@ipirti.gov.in

### EMPLOYMENT NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited from eligible Indian National candidates by IPIRTI, Bengaluru for the following Posts:

| Sl. No. | Name of the Post | No. of Posts lying Vacant | Essential qualification as per Approved Recruitment Rules | Pay Matrix Level | Reservation as per Roster |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Driver | 01 (ONE) | **Essential:** i) Possession of a valid driving license for motor cars. ii) Pass in 10th standard from Central / State Board. **Desirable:** i) Knowledge of Motor mechanism (The candidate should be able to rectify minor-defects in vehicle). ii) Trade Test. | Level 2 [19900-34000] | UR |
| 2. | Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) | 01 (ONE) | **Essential:** 10th Standard pass from a recognized board. | Level 1 [18000-30600] | UR |
| 3. | Carpenter | 01 (ONE) | SSSC/HSC/12th in Science with 60% marks in aggregate/ITI certificate of 2 years duration in relevant field. | Level 2 [19900-34000] | UR |
| 4. | Laboratory Assistant | 01 (ONE) | SSC/10th standard in Science with 50% marks in the aggregate or ITI certificate of 2 years duration in relevant field. | Level 1 [18000-30600] | UR |

**GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS:**

1. **Age limit:** (a) Between 18 & 27 years for post No.1 and 2. (b) Between 18 & 28 years for Post No. 3 and 4. The Crucial date for determining the age limit shall be the closing date for receipt of application. Age relaxation for Government servants as per approved Recruitment Rules of IPIRTI.
2. Interested candidates may submit their applications (separate applications for each post) in the prescribed form which can be downloaded from our website www.ipirti.gov.in. Non-refundable Application fee of Rs.600/- (Rs.300/- for SC/ST candidates along with renewed/latest caste certificate proof) should be paid along with application, by way of Demand Draft ONLY drawn from any nationalized bank, in favour of IPIRTI Corpus Fund, payable at Bangalore.
3. **Last Date for receipt of completed application form along with relevant documents is 30 days (including NE Region) from the date of publication of this advertisement in the Employment News. The duly completed applications along with requisite application fee should be send to: Director, Indian Plywood Industries Research & Training Institute (IPIRTI), Post Bag No. 2273, off. Tumkur Road, HMT Link Road, Bengaluru-560 022, Karnataka.**
4. **Please refer to our website www.ipirti.gov.in for further details about general instructions and terms & conditions about the advertised posts. Updates/Corrigendum/Addendum or Cancellation to this advertisement, if any, shall be published on IPIRTI website only. No interim correspondence will be entertained. Therefore, the candidates are advised to check IPIRTI website regularly.**

**Sd/- Director**

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## DEFENCE BIOENGINEERING & ELECTROMEDICAL LABORATORY (DEBEL)
## DEFENCE R&D ORGANISATION (DRDO), MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
## POST BOX NO.9326, C.V. RAMAN NAGAR PO., BENGALURU -560 093

Advt No. DEBEL/HRD/Apprentice/01/2020

Defence Bioengineering & Electromedical Laboratory (DEBEL) Bangalore, a Premier Institute under the aegis of Defence R&D Organization (DRDO) is engaged in Research and Development in Life Support Systems, Biomedical Devices, Environmental Protection Systems and Aircrew Protective Systems.

**APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE POST OF GRADUATE AND DIPLOMA APPRENTICESHIP**

No. of vacancies:

(a) Graduate Apprenticeship Trainees : 18

| Mechanical | Electronics/ E&C | Biomedical | Bio-Technology | Computer Science/ IT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 06 | 04 | 04 | 02 | 02 |

(b) Technician (Diploma) Apprenticeship Trainees : 4

| Mechanical | Electronics/ E&C/Electrical |
|---|---|
| 2 | 2 |

The number of vacancies likely to increase in future and a panel of candidates would be operated for filling future vacancies in the order of merit/discipline for a period of one year from the date of interview.

**Educational Qualification:**

- BE/B.Tech for Graduate Trainees; Diploma in Engg for Technician Trainees.
- Candidate should not have undergone Apprenticeship Training elsewhere
- Candidate should not have work experience of one year or more
- Candidate should not have completed 3 years after passing of the qualifying examination.

**Duration: 1 year**

Stipend: Rs.9,000/- PM for Graduate Trainees & Rs.8,000/- PM for Technician Apprenticeship Trainees.

**Application procedure:**

Candidates should first register themselves in the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) portal. For registration, log on to http://mhrdnats.gov.in

Duly filled application along with the relevant documents in support of educational qualification, date of birth, caste certificate (if applicable) should be scanned in a single PDF file and emailed to hrd.debel@debel.drdo.in Application form can also be downloaded from 'What's New' section of DRDO website (www.drdo.gov.in). Last date for receipt of application is 15 days from the date of publication of advt. in Employment News. Applications received incomplete/after due date are liable to be rejected.

**Selection Procedure:** Candidates will be short-listed and selected based on their marks secured in Degree / Diploma. Selected candidates will be intimated by through offer letter/ Mail ID provided in the bio-data.

**General Instructions:**

- No TA & DA shall be admissible for joining, if selected
- Selected candidates should make their own arrangement for their stay & transport in Bangalore
- Antecedents of candidate will be verified again at the time of joining, if selected.
- The offer of Apprenticeship does not confer any right of employment in DRDO.

Head HRD
For Director
DEBEL

Bio-data to be typed in the format enclosed and submitted.
Those filled by hand will be summarily rejected

**APPLICATION FORM FOR GRADUATE AND DIPLOMA APPRENTICESHIP TRAINEE IN DEBEL, BANGALORE**

Advt No. DEBEL/HRD/APPRENTICE/01/2020

| | |
|---|---|
| GRADUATE APPRENTICE | |
| DIPLOMA APPRENTICE | |

Affix Passport Size Photograph

**SUBJECT APPLIED FOR :**_____

1. Name in Full (Block letters) :
2. Father's / Mother's/Spouse Name :_____/_____/_____
3. Gender :
4. Age & Date of Birth :
5. Category : Gen / SC / ST / OBC / Other
6. Marital Status :
7. Postal Address :
8. Mobile No / Email Address :
9. Permanent Address :
10. Educational Qualifications (From SSC/Matric onwards. Attested copies to be enclosed)

| Exam passed/ Appearing | Subject(s) | University / Board | Month & Year of Passing | Duration of Course | Percentage | Division / Class |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Xth | | | | | | |
| XIIth | | | | | | |
| Diploma | | | | | | |
| B. Tech | | | | | | |
| Other Qualification | | | | | | |

11. Experience (if any)

| Name of Organisation with designation | Period of service | | Job Description | Reasons for leaving |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | From | To | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

12. Any information, if you want to add:

**DECLARATION:** It is certified that the above information is true / correct to the best of my knowledge and nothing has been concealed / distorted. If any information found incorrect at any stage, I will be liable for action taken by the authority as per existing rules / law.

**Place :**
**Date :** **Signature of the candidate**

List of Enclosures : [List all attached documents clearly, and include a scanned passport-size photo]

**davp10301/11/0116/2021**

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## MUNICIPAL OFFICE KUCHAMAN CITY (NAGAUR)

Email: eo.mcorp.kuchaman@rajasthan.gov.in, munibkcity@gmail.com Phone No. 01586-220022, 01586-221526

SR.NO.:MBK/DEV/2020-21/3112 DATE: 22/12/2020

**-:: NOTICE INVITING BID::-**

01 Bids for **Civil Development Road works (cost 299.87 lacs)** is invited from interested bidders up-to 10.00 AM (time) 11.01.2021 (date). Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in.) of the state.
**NIB NO. DLB2021A5300 UBN NO. DLB2021WSOB19729**

**Admin/Executive Officer**
Raj. Samwad/C/8108/2020-2021 **Municipal Office Kuchaman City**

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## UJVN Limited

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No.U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website:www.ujvnl.com

Letter No:. 851 **Corrigendum (Retender Notice)** Date: 24.12.2020

**e-Procurement Tender No: 01/EE(BBCGPP)/2020-21**

Due to unavoidable circumstances, office of Executive Engineer, (E&M-I) BBCGPP, UJVN Ltd. Kashipur invites online tenders again from interested parties under retendering process for Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) of 22 MW Co-Generation Power Project along with concurrent modernization of "The Bazpur Co-operative Sugar Factory Limited, Bazpur, Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand" on Turnkey basis. Scheduled dates of bidding are as follows:

**Last date for receipt of bids on portal** : 15.01.2021 up to 17:00 Hrs.
**Last date for receipt of hard copies** : 18.01.2021 up to 17:00 Hrs.
**Date of opening of bids on the website** : 19.01.2021 at 11:30 Hrs.

Further details are available at the e-procurement portal **"http://uktenders.gov.in".**

**"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"**

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **(1) Sri. P.D. Periya Swamy** Son of Sri. Doraswamy Gounder, **(2) Sri. P. Karthik** S/o. Sri. P.D. Periya Swamy, Yeshwanthpura, Bangalore - 560 022, intends to purchase property bearing Municipal Corporation No. 42 (Old No. 5) situated at Yeshwanthapura Railway Parallel Road, 8th Cross, Yeshwanthpura, Bangalore, Ward No. 3, Presently BBMP, PID No. 3-67-42, measuring East to West 55-00 (Fifty Five) Feet and North to South 36-00 (Thirty Six) Feet, totally 1980 sq.ft. along with 1200 square feet ACC Sheet roofed with civil amenities building and bounded on East by: Anjanappa's Property, West by: Road, North by: N. Ashwathanarayana's property, South by: Smt. Shanthamma's property, with one **Sri. Riyaz Ahmed, S/o. Sri. Peer Pasha, R/at No. 1222/3, Hameed Building, 1st Main Road, 4th Cross, L.N. Colony, Yeshwanthpura, Bangalore - 560 022.** If anybody has got right, title, power of attorney, power, minor claims, co-parsanary rights, ancestral rights, joint family property rights, or any objections or any types of claims may file their objections and claims along with relevant and evidentiary proof documents and documentary proofs to the undersigned within Seven (7) days from the date of publication of this Notice.

**V.G. Manjunath,** Advocate
No.17/3, 1st Floor, T.N. Rangaiah Complex, Vidyanagara, Near Muthoot Finance, Tumkur Main Road, T. Dasarahalli, Bangalore - 560 057.
Mobile: 9620399285 / 9448533525
Date: 25-12-2020 Place: Bangalore

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QuoteExpress
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ROBERT H SCHULLER

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

My Clients are intending to purchase the following schedule property from **Sri. DINESH.L.JAIN,** aged about 46 years, son of Sri.Ladulal Jain and **Smt. SANGEETHA,** aged about 45 years, wife of Sri. Dinesh.L.Jain, both are residing at No. 239, 18th Cross, Lakkasandra Extension, Wilson Garden, Bangalore - 560 030, who represents as absolute owners and also they have informed that Earlier Owners have lost some Original Documents pertaining to the Schedule Property. The Public is hereby informed that if anybody have any objections for the above said sale, they may file their objections along with the related documents to the under signed within **Two weeks** from the date of this publication. If no objections have been received within the above time, my clients will proceed to purchase the property as nobody have any objections.

**SCHEDULE**

All that piece and parcel of the vacant site bearing present BBMP Khatha No.11, PID No.62-2-11, Old No.224/11, Earlier No. 225, situated at **12th Cross Road, Wilson Garden, Old Ward No.62, New Ward No.145, Bangalore,** measuring,

**East to West : 80 feet**
**North to South : 50 feet**
**In total 4000 square feet**

Bounded on the :
**East by : 12th Cross Road**
**West by : Private Property No.222**
**North by : Private Property**
**South by : Private Property No.226**

**MAKAM NAGARAJA GUPTA**
**MAKAM LAW ASSOCIATES**
**Advocates**
No. 429-430, Second Floor
Alankar Pearl Plaza, K.G. Road
Bangalore-560 009

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## SOUTHERN RAILWAY

**(CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION)**
**E-TENDER NOTICE**
**NO.16-CECNMS-20-21-E-8992-II**
**Dated: 23/12/2020**

The Chief Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai 600 008 invites e-tender for the following work(s) as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal www.ireps.gov.in . The tenderers/Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and **only online tenders will be accepted.** The Cost of the tender form and the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) should be made through online payment gateway available in the website by the way of multiple bank's net-banking, debit card and credit card.

**NAME OF THE WORK:** MRTS – PHASE-II – Tirumailai – Velachery : Proposed Construction of balance works from Tirumailai to Velachery stations, (i.e) at MUNDAKANNI AMMAN KOIL, MANDAVELI, GREENWAYS ROAD, KASTURBA NAGAR, INDIRA NAGAR, THIRUVANMIYUR, THARAMANI, PERUNGUDI & VELACHERY Station buildings. (TWO PACKET SYSTEM)

**Approximate Cash Value (Rupees):** 18,94,65,216.54

**Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees):** 10,97,300.00

**Period of Completion in Months:** 10 (TEN)

**Closing Date @** 15.30 hrs 18/01/2021

For further details, please refer to web site portal **www.ireps.gov.in** or contact Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Construction, E.V.R. High Road, Egmore, Chennai – 600 008.

**Chief Engineer (Construction).**
**Egmore, Chennai – 600 008.**

Follow us on : twitter.com/@GMSRailway

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## PUBLIC NOTICE-AUCTION CUM SALE OF PROPERTIES

**Sale of Immovable & Movable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002**

**E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable & Movable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.** Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrowers and Guarantors that the below described immovable & movable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the **physical possession** of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Asset Reconstruction Company India Ltd (Arcil) an Asset Reconstruction Company registered with Reserve Bank of India under the provisions of the SARFAESI Act, 2002. **Arcil** has acquired from the banks/financial institutions mentioned below the financial assets and has acquired the rights of the Secured Creditor. The assets will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis** as per the brief particulars given hereunder as per below mentioned schedule:

| Sr. No. | Loan Account Number / Name of Bank | Name of Original Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor | Trust Name | Type/ Size in/ Nature of Property | Total dues Outstanding in INR | Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in INR | Reserve Price in INR | Date of Inspection | Date and Time of Auction | Type of Possession |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | DRHLBLR00420712/ Development Credit Bank Ltd. | Guru Charan Goswami / Binarani Goswami | Arcil-Retail Loan Portfolio-022-A-Trust | Land: N.A.Sq.Feet Const/Flat: 1065 Sq.Feet [Freehold] | 35,69,747.30 as on 24.12.2020 | 1,60,000/- | 16,00,000/- | 12.01.2021 | 27.01.2021 12:00 Noon | Physical |
| PROPERTY DESCRIPTION/SCHEDULE:- Flat No 102 First Floor, Akruthi Apartment, Site No.163, Khatha No.10/163, Sy.No.8, Chikkadunnasandra Village, Yamare Grama Panchayat, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore, Karnataka. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 404SHL34378142 & 404SHL34378314 / Bajaj Finance Ltd. | Navajeeth N | Arcil-Retail Loan Portfolio-042-C-Trust | Land: N.A.Sq.Feet Const/Flat: 840 Sq.Feet [Freehold] | 33,96,951.84 as on 24.12.2020 | 1,95,000/- | 19,50,000/- | 12.01.2021 | 27.01.2021 12:30 P.M. | Physical |
| PROPERTY DESCRIPTION/SCHEDULE:- Flat No.202, Second Floor, **"Pristine Srikrishna-II"** Apartment, in Converted Property Bearing Sy.No.50/2, Property No.7449/50/2, situated at Kammasandra Village, Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore, Karnataka. | | | | | | | | | | |

**Important Information regarding Auction Process**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Auction Date | As prescribed herein above | |
| 2 | Place for Submission of Bids and Place of Auction | Unit No.305, 3rd Floor, Kedia Arcade, # 92, Infantry Road, Bangalore-560001. | |
| | Bids can be submitted online / in person depending upon the Covid situation in Branch locality: kamal.mishra@arcil.co.in, satheesh.r@arcil.co.in, shivshankar.ub@arcil.co.in | | |
| 3 | Web-Site For Auction | www.arcil.co.in | |
| 4 | Contact Persons with Phone Number | Kamal Mishra / Satheesh / Shivashankar UB 9819820760 / 9738141146 / 8073722285 | |
| 5 | Last date for Submission of EMD | Same day 1 hour before Auction | |
| 6 | All payments including EMD to be made by way of Demand Draft payable at | Bangalore | |
| 7 | Name in whose favour Demand Drafts to be drawn | The name as shown in Trust Column against each property. | |
| 8 | Time of Inspection | Between 11.00 am to 4.00 pm **Note:** Date & time of inspection may be changed in view of Covid-19 situation | |

* A bidder may, on his own choice, avail the facility of online participation in the auction by making application in prescribed format which is available along with the offer/tender document on the website address mentioned herein above. Online bidding will take place at website of organization as mentioned herein above, and shall be subject to the terms and conditions contained in the tender document. The Tender Document and detailed Terms & Conditions for the Auction may be downloaded from our website **www.arcil.co.in** or the same may also be collected from the concerned Branch office of **Arcil** as stated above. Please note that sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions as stated in the Bid Document. Sale is strictly subject to terms and conditions incorporated in this advertisement and the prescribed Bid/Tender Document. The Authorized Officer reserves the right to reject any/all bids without assigning any reason. This notice is also to be treated as a 30 days notice under Rule 8 & 9 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002.

**Date: 26-12-2020** **Sd/- Authorized Officer,**
**Place: Bangalore** **Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Limited**

## ASSET RECONSTRUCTION COMPANY (I) LTD. CIN-U6599MH2002PLC134884

Registred Office: The Ruby, 10th Floor, 29 Senapati Bapat Marg, Dadar (West), Mumbai-400028. Tel: + 91-2266581300. www.arcil.co.in
Branch Address: Unit No. 305, 3rd Floor Kedia Arcade, # 92, Infantry Road, Bangalore-560001. Tel: 080-25598054/55

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## PRAGATHI CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.,

Head Office: No.12/1, 1st Main, 9th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560003. Ph No.080-23365137/23369915

**SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES THROUGH PUBLIC AUCTION**

Auction Sale under the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 Section 13(4) of the Immovable properties mortgaged to **PRAGATHI CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.,,** is brought to Sale under "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION".

| Name and address of the Borrower | Description of the Properties | Boundaries & Measurement | Reserve Price Secured debt | Balance Outstanding Amount to be paid to Bank | Date and Place of Public Auction |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mr.Venkataiah S/o Shanthaiah** No.80, 11th Cross, 1st Stage, 2nd Phase, Gokula, Mathikere, Bangalore-560054 | All that piece and parcel of house property no.80, bearing Municipal No.44/1, PID No.3-44-44/1, Property No.12, 11th Cross, 1st Stage, 2nd Phase, Gokula, Ward No.3, Yeshwanthapura Grama, Sy No.6/1, Bangalore-560054 | East to West: 15 Feet and North to South: 45 Feet, and Western Northern: East to West: 15 Feet, and North to South: 9 Feet, total: 540 sq and Building consisting consists of Three Floors and bounded by: East by: Property No.11, West by: 3 Feet comman passage and there after property of venkatesh & Thirumalayya. North By: Remaining portion of same number property measring East to West: 30 Feet, and North to South: 9 Feet, South by: Road. | **Rs 55,00,000/- (Rupees Fifty Five Lakhs Only)** | **Rs.43,29,783 ( interest & other chargesas on 02.02.2019 plus charges, costs, etc from 02.02.2019)** | **30.01.2021 at 12:00PM At Head Office, PRAGATHI CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.,** |

**Terms and Conditions of the Auction:-**

1). The auction will be conducted in the premises of above mentioned **PRAGATHI CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.,** address. 2. For participation in the auction the intending bidder have to deposit an amount equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price of the property being cautioned deposit which is refundable, 3. The successful bidders should deposit 25% of the bid amount on the same day at the sale in cash/D.D to the bank and the balance within 15 days from the date of auction 4. The cautioned deposite shall be forfeited by the bank without any prior notice, if the successful bidder fails to adhere to the terms and condition of public auction, time and commits default in any manner. 5. The successful bidders shall bear all expenses like Stamp Duty, Registration fee etc., for getting the Sale Certificate Registered in his/her favour. 6. The schedule property will be auctioned as it is and where it is in the condition under the terms and condition of the SARFAESI ACT 2002. 7. The authorized officer shall have powers to accept or reject bids or postpone / cancel the auction without assigning any reasons thereof. 8. For inspection of the property and other particular, the intending bidders may contact the undersigned at **Pragathi Co-operative Bank Ltd., Head Office, or through Telephone No.080-23365137/23369915, +91 8660686717 they are at liberty to make their own assessment / enquiry about the property.**

**Date: 23.12.2020** **Sd/- Authorised Officer**
**Place: Bangalore** **Pragathi Co-operative Bank Ltd.,**

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QuoteExpress
**IF YOU'RE GOING THROUGH HELL, KEEP GOING**
WINSTON CHURCHILL

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public are hereby informed that, I, **Sri. Viswanathan.** T, S/o. Thangavel R, aged about 37 years, residing at DV001, New BEL Road, Opp. ISRO Hqrs, Devasandra, RMV Extension 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560 094. Have entered into an Agreement of Sale in the below mentioned Schedule Properties Item No. 1 from its absolute owners **Sri. S. Sadasivan,** S/o Late M.K. Subramanian, aged about 75 years and **Smt. Padmavathi** W/o. Sri. Sadasivan, Aged about 68 years, both are residing at No. 69, MEG Layout, A Narayanapura, Bangalore-560016 and Item No.2 property from its absolute owner **Dr. Swaminathan Padmanabhan,** S/o. K. Padmanabhan, aged about 50 years, Represented by his GPA Holder and his father **Sri. K. Padmanabhan,** S/o V. Krishnamurthy, Aged about 77 years, Both are residing at No. "ANUGRAHA", 631, 16th Cross, 6th Phase, JP Nagar, Bangalore-560 078.

Any Person or persons, Nationalized Banks, Co-operative Society, BDA, KHB, KIADB or any Government body objecting for the proposed purchase or having any right in the below mentioned Schedule Properties may lodge their objections and /or claims with the above mentioned my address along with supporting documentary evidence ***within THREE DAYS*** from the date of this publication. Objections and any claims received thereafter will not be binding on me and I will proceed to purchase the below mentioned properties as if there are no claimants/ objections.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTY**

**ITEM No.1:** All that piece and parcel of the immovable Property bearing residential Vacant **Site No.34,** BBMP Katha No.34/2, Situated at **Doddabettahalli Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk,** presently comes under BBMP Limits, measuring **East** to **West : (47+49)/2 feet and North to South: 30 feet totally 1440 Sq.feet** and bounded on:
**East by:** 30 feet Road, **West by:** Site No.43, **North by:** Site No.35, **South by:** Site No.33.

**ITEM No.2:** All that piece and parcel of the immovable Property bearing residential Vacant **Site No.35,** BBMP Katha No.35/2, Situated at **Doddabettahalli Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk,** presently comes under BBMP Limits, measuring **East** to **West : 49+50 feet** and **North to South: 30 feet, totally 1485 Sq.feet** and bounded on:
**East by:** 30 feet Road, **West by:** Site No.42, **North by:** Site No.36, **South by:** Site No.34.

***Sd/-* Viswanathan. T**
**Mob: 99866 24290**

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

**NATIONAL CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL COMMISSION**

Telephone No. 24608741,
Fax No. 24651519,
Website: http://ncdrc.nic.in

Upbhokta Nyay Bhawan, 'F' Block,
General Pool Office Complex, INA,
NEW DELHI-110 023.

**CONSUMER COMPLAINT NO.1678 OF 2019**

SANTHOSH NARASIMHA MURTHY & ORS ... COMPLAINANT(S)
**VERSUS**
M/s MANTRI CASTLES PVT LTD & ANR ... OPP. PARTY (S)

To,

**THE PURCHASERS/ALLOTTEES OF THE RESIDENTIAL FLATS IN "MANTRI SERENITY" PHASE-2, BANGALORE DEVELOPED BY M/s MANTRI CASTLES PVT LTD & ANR**

Whereas the above complaints have, through **Mr. GOVIND JEE, ADVOCATE, CHAMBER No.301, New Lawyers Chamber, Supreme court of India, Bhagwan Das Road, New Delhi-110001, Mobile: 9654425099,** filed the captioned Consumer Complaint before the Hon'ble National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, New Delhi on behalf and/ or for the benefit of all the consumers who have either booked or have been allotted a flat, in the project namely "MANTRI SERENITY" PHASE-2, BANGALORE, being developed by the Opposite Party named above for redressal of their common grievances, and seeking the following reliefs:-

a. Direct opposite party to handover possession of the fully constructed and completed flats to each of the complainants & to each buyer having same interest ; forthwith;
b. Pay to each of the Complainants & to each buyer same interest, compensatory interest @18%p.a. on individual consideration amount paid, for abnormal & delay in construction, till handing over possession of flats to complainants, strictly in accordance with schedule "C" of Agreement of Construction, dated 20.10,2012; computing total period of delay as indicated in para 30 of the Consumer Complaint;
c. Refund the illegally charged car parking fee to complainants & to each buyer having same interest with an interest @ 18% p.a & to hold the OP guilty of committing unfair and restrictive trade practice against the complainants & also against each buyer having same interest;
d. Pay to each of the complainants/flat owners a lump sum compensation of Rs.10 Lacs. Per flat/unit; by way of compensation for mental harassment and agony, to be distributed equally among the complainants and further compensation in the same proportion such other buyers/consumers with same interest who will be impleaded after issuance of public notice;
e. Award cost of the complaint to the complainants; and/or.
f. Pass any other and/or further relief, which this Hon'ble Commission thinks fit and proper, in the facts and circumstances of the case, in favour of the complainants and against the OP.

**And whereas** the Hon'ble Commission vide its order dated **01.12.2020** is pleased to direct issue of notice of the institution of the above captioned complaint to all the consumers having same interest in the matter. Accordingly, all allottees of the above referred Project having the same grievance against the Opposite Party, may appear before the commission in-person or through an Advocate/Authorized Representative on **30.03.2021 at 10:30 a.m.** They can inspect the file of the aforementioned complaint in the office of the Counsel for the Complainant (s) and apply for being impleaded as a party to the complaint.

They may also note that the decision of the Commission in the captioned complaint will be binding on all the consumers on whose behalf and/or for whose benefit the complaint is instituted.

Dated, this 14th day of December 2020

**By Order**
**Sd/-**
**(RAJESH NATH)**
**ASSISTANT REGISTRAR**

Seal of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission

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## ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ, ಬಂದರು ಮತ್ತು ಒಳನಾಡು ಜಲಸಾರಿಗೆ ಇಲಾಖೆ

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ನಂ. 2 ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ವಿಭಾಗ, 1ನೇ ಮಹಡಿ, ಲೋ.ಇ. ಪೂರಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡ, ಕೆ.ಆರ್. ವೃತ್ತ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದೂ.: 080-22122856 www.kpwd.gov.in

**ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ**

**ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 36/2020-21 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23.12.2020**

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ನಂ.2 ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರುರವರು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ಅಧಿನಿಯಮ-2000ರನ್ವಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ-4 ನಿಯಮಗಳಂತೆ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ (https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in) ಪಿಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಅರ್ಹ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ದಾರರಿಂದ ಒಂದು ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರೊಸೆಸಿಂಗ್ ಬೆಲೆಯನ್ನು ಇ-ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಚಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. (ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆ -1ನೇ ಕರೆ)

| ಕ್ರ. ಸಂ. | ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಸರು | ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗೆ ಇಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಕೆಲಸದ ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ) | ಇಎಂಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ) | ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಪೂರ್ಣಗೊಳಿಸಲು ನಿಗದಿಗೊಳಿಸಿರುವ ಕಾಲಾವಧಿ (ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Construction of Samudaya Bhavan at 3rd Battalian, KSRP, Koramangala Bangalore. **(KPWD/2020-21/BD/WORK_INDENT129831)** | 1,21,35,658.00 | Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rs. 1,00,000/- through E payment and Rs. 1,00,000/- through Bank Guarantee) | 7 ತಿಂಗಳು |

**ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ದರ್ಜೆ:** 3ನೇ ದರ್ಜೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮೇಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು.

(1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟನ್ನು ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಿಂದ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **23.12.2020.** (2) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **31.12.2020 ಸಂಜೆ 4:30** ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ. (3) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಇ-ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **02.01.2021** ರಂದು **ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11:30**ಕ್ಕೆ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ **(https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in)** ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಪಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಟೆನಿನ/ಎಲ್‌ಸಿ/2169/2020-21

**ಸಹಿ/-, ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್,**
**ನಂ. 2 ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು**

**ಕೋವಿಡ್-19. ಆತಂಕ ಬೇಡ; ಮುನ್ನೆಚ್ಚರಿಕೆ ಇರಲಿ.**

ಮಾಸ್ಕ್ ಧರಿಸಿ | 6 ಅಡಿ ದೈಹಿಕ ಅಂತರ ಪಾಲಿಸಿ | ಕೈಗಳ ಸ್ವಚ್ಛತೆ ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಿ

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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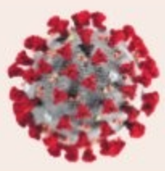


## COVID VACCINATION DRY RUN IN 4 STATES NEXT WEEK

**The Centre plans a dry dry-run of the vaccination process in four states — Punjab, Gujarat, Assam and Andhra Pradesh — next week**

### MOCK DRILLS IN TWO DISTRICTS EACH

The states will plan it in two districts each in different medical settings — district hospitals, community/primary healthcare centres, urban and rural sites, and private facilities next Monday and Tuesday. The exercise includes data entry in Co-WIN, an online platform for monitoring vaccine delivery, and management of any possible adverse events due to immunisation | P9

### HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE FOR MANAGERS

- The mock drill will also check cold storage facilities, transport arrangements for vaccine and management of crowds with proper physical distancing at the vaccination sites
- The two-day dry run will provide a hands-on experience to programme managers at various levels, the health ministry said

**125**

**PERSONS ARE LIKELY TO BE BROUGHT IN FOR DRY RUN IN ONE DISTRICT**

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

# Modi broadside on political foes

Says they're fanning the farmers' agitation through false narratives; let farm laws stay for a year or two before taking call, urges Rajnath

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

KEEPING the offer of talks open, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday led a battery of Union ministers and BJP leaders who launched a fierce counter offensive against the farm agitation, saying it is being fuelled by rumours and falsehood churned out by the ruling party's political and ideological opponents.

While Modi sought to package the initiative as a Brand India building exercise in agriculture for the international market, Union Minister for Defence Rajnath Singh suggested trying out the new farm laws for one or two years before taking a call on their utility.

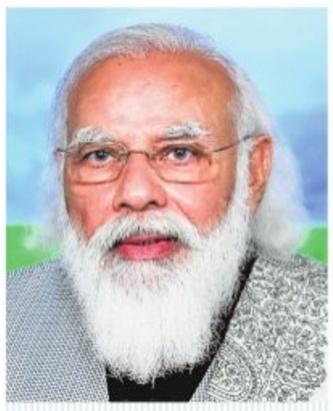
Modi cited the absence of the APMC (Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee) in Kerala and the non-implementation of the PM-Kisan Nidhi scheme in West Bengal to argue that the ideological opponents (of the BJP) are stoking farmers' protests and likened them to "event management".

Rajnath, while addressing a group of farmers in the national capital, sought to assure them that the government will be open to considering amendments in the farm laws, but first they ought to be implemented for one or two years. Home minister Amit Shah, who addressed another group of farmers here, stressed that the Opposition is spreading falsehood about dismantling the *mandi* system though it would remain unaffected. He assured that corporates can't snatch away any farmer's land.

Modi maintained that the government is ready for talks. "I want to assure that the government is ready for talks even with politically and ideologically driven critics, on facts and substance of the new farm laws," he said.

"Big speeches are being made at the protest venue to grab headlines. But the same set of people driven with certain political ideology will not protest in Kerala where there is no APMC or in Bengal where 70 lakh farmers have been deprived of the benefits of PM Kisan Nidhi scheme," Modi said.

Modi added that genuine concerns were flagged in the initial stages of the agitation, like the minimum support price (MSP) mechanism, but later all sorts of political issues, including demands for the release of those who are in jails on charges of violence, were raised. He charged that farmers suffered the most for decades when such parties were in power at the Centre. Modi also interacted with seven farmers who shared their experience of benefits from the new farm laws. P9



**There's a kind of event management going on. People are taking selfies and coming on television. There's an attempt to harass the people of Delhi and hurt the economy**

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

### MAMATA JOINS ISSUE

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of peddling half-truths over non-implementation of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme in the state. She said she has written two letters to the Union agriculture minister and spoken to him two days ago over it | P9

## Seven-member panel soon on talks strategy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi/Chandigarh

AFTER a flurry of correspondence and the Prime Minister's hardsell on the new farm laws, the agitators on Friday decided to form a seven-member committee consisting of farmer union leaders to devise strategies for talks with the Centre.

The committee is expected to include Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) chief Gurnam Singh Chaduni, Krantikari Kisan Union president Darshan Pal, BKU-Rajewal head Balbir Singh Rajewal, farmer leader Shiv Kumar Kaka and activist Yogendra Yadav.

Farmers unions are expected to send their reply to the Centre's latest missive in a day or two but won't budge on the demand to repeal the three laws. This was decided at a meeting of 32 farmer unions at the Singhu border on Friday.

BKU (Rajewal group) general secretary Onkar Singh said: "The leaders were clear that we will talk to the government only if it decides to repeal these laws. Our Sanyukt Morcha will meet on Saturday to vet our letter to the Centre."

Meanwhile, a group of people launched an online campaign urging NRIs to come to India to lend moral and material support to the protest.

Farmers participate in the Kisan Samman Diwas, held at the AMPC yard, Yeshwanthpur, in Bengaluru on Friday; (right) Chief Minister B S Yeddiyurappa addressed the gathering. Union Minister D V Sadananada Gowda was present | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

# I HAD A DREAM, SAYS BSY THE FARMER, BUT...

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister B S Yediyurappa, who was addressing farmers at the Kisan Samman Diwas event at the Yeshwanthpur Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yard on Friday morning, recalled how he had led a protest for farm sector reforms five decades ago while trying to convince farmers about the pros of the new agriculture reform laws. However, going by the reactions of farmers present at the event, it seemed to have not cut much ice with them.

In his address, Yediyurappa recalled that 50 years ago, he had protested to demand an amendment to the APMC Act. "I had sat on satyagraha for a week at the Shikaripura APMC demanding the amendment. I am fortunate to bring those amendments when I am the Chief Minister," he said.

Despite the CM and the ministers present there promising that the lives of farmers would be better off after the amendment to the APMC Act, many farmers who took part in the event remained sceptical. Besides, Yediyurappa slamming those protesting against the new farm laws and calling them "selfish", and Agriculture Minister BC Patil saying that the protesters were agents of middlemen, may not have helped much.

While the Chief Minister's dream of bringing changes to the Acts — Land Reforms (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020, and Karnataka Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation and Development) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 — have materialised, farmers expressed concern that it was almost impossible for the government to weed out the menace of middlemen and, until then, a better life was a distant dream for them, they felt.

The amendments to the Acts, the farmers fear, will make them more vulnerable to the private sector, which could, in turn, encourage middlemen to thrive.

Rangegowda, a farmer from Channarayapatna taluk in Hassan district, said he was not even aware of the amendments made to the APMC Act, but he was sure that farmers cannot prosper until middlemen are completely removed from the agricultural produce marketing system.

"I feel it is almost impossible to bring in a system free of middlemen. They (middlemen) decide the price for our products and they earn much more than what we get. The system is in such a condition that no farmer can sell his produce at APMCs without a middleman. Hence, if farmers have to lead a prosperous life, the government has to weed out middlemen from APMCs first," Rangegowda felt. P6

### MANY IGNORANT ABOUT AMENDMENTS

Many farmers who attended the event had no clue what the amendments were all about, and about 30 per cent of those gathered for the event were party workers. Several BJP workers, sporting green shawls, attended the event.

TOP POST

## Appointment of an 'outsider' surprises many in NIMHANS

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

HEAD of Neurology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Prof M V Padma Srivastava is the first candidate from outside the institute to be appointed Director, National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS).

NIMHANS has confirmed Dr Padma's appointment to the top post. Registrar Dr BSS Rao told TNIE that Prof Padma Srivastava "will take charge as the new Director after being relieved from AIIMS".

According to sources, the appointment of an "outsider" has come as a surprise to many in the institute, because there has been no precedence. Many others said it was expected sooner or later, after the Director's post became an open selection post after 2012, when NIMHANS was made an Institute of National Importance by Parliament.

Eight candidates had applied for the Director's post, including five from NIMHANS. Among them were Head of Department (HoD), Psychiatry, Dr Prathima Murthy, former HoD, Psychiatry, Dr Prabha Chandra, former HoDs, Neurology, Dr Nalini and Dr Pramod Pal, and former HoD, Neurosurgery, Dr Malla Bhaskara Rao. Three candidates from outside NIMHANS, including Dr Padma, had applied after the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare advertised for the post in March this year. The interview was conducted virtually by Union Minister of Health Dr Harsh Vardhan and Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan. P7

## Shah's mid-Jan visit to K'taka may clear the air on cabinet expansion

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

AFTER denials of a change of guard in Karnataka and assurances on the impending cabinet expansion happening 'soon' by several state and central BJP leaders, Union Home Minister Amit Shah's official two-day visit to Karnataka in the second week of January is expected to clear the air on several such prickly issues.

Shah is likely to visit Karnataka after Sankranti festival. He will visit Bengaluru and hold a meeting with party leaders and head to Bhadravathi in Shivamogga district and Hosapete in Ballari district to inaugurate Central Reservation Police Force training centres. He is also expected to visit the world heritage site Hampi. The local administration is expected to begin ground work on beefing up security and making other arrangements soon. Shah is likely to visit Vijayapura district too.

Adding grist to the mill was Thursday's quick visit by BJP state vice-president BY Vijayendra to New Delhi where he met party National General Secretary in charge of Karnataka, Arun Singh, and is reported to have discussed cabinet expansion. Along with turncoats including A H Vishwanath, M T B Nagaraj, R Shankar and Munirathna, there is pressure to include C P Yogeshwar and Umesh Katti in the cabinet.

Amidst the buzz on change of guard, lobbying for cabinet berths and differences among BJP leaders in the state, the party dispensation here is hoping that Shah's visit will send out a strong message and put and end to any uncertainties.

A senior minister in Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's cabinet said they are clueless why the party high command is not giving the nod for cabinet expansion. Yediyurappa had met them in Delhi and also spoke to them on phone on several occasions, but nothing has moved.

"We are hoping that Shah's visit will give us some answers," said the minister.

CONTINUED ON: P6

## Stricter curbs for New Year's Eve? Police choose to wait and watch

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

DIRECTIVES to issue guidelines on more curbs for New Year's Eve celebrations in Bengaluru over the next two days have come from none other than the Home Minister himself. But the city police will rather wait till it's closer to December 31. The once-bitten-twice-shy police brass is wary after the 'embarrassing' withdrawal of orders on night curfew hours before it was to be imposed on Thursday night.

The police had held several meetings to enforce the night curfew and had even declared prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) across the state, which proved embarrassing for them when they learnt that the night curfew plan was withdrawn just before it was to come into effect.

Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Friday said the Bengaluru city police commissioner will issue guideline on restrictions for New Year's Eve celebrations by Sunday and that the police have been given the authority to impose more curbs at specific roads or places in their jurisdiction.

A top police official informed *The New Indian Express* that the police are wary about issuing more stringent guidelines hurriedly after Thursday's fiasco. P7

**It was very embarrassing for the police department, which imposed Section 144 across the state over the night curfew. Even the media reported the do's and don'ts as per police orders on the night curfew. But in the evening, the CM declared that night curfew was withdrawn. Police officers had held several meetings to discuss the enforcement of the night curfew on Wednesday and Thursday**

A police officer, on condition of anonimity

EXPRESS READ

### Daniel Pearl's 'killers' to be released

Karachi: British-born al-Qaeda leader Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and his three aides, whose release in the abduction and murder case of US journalist Daniel Pearl was ordered by a two-judge bench of a court here in Pakistan, would walk out of the prison on Saturday, police and lawyers said on Friday. P11

### Rajinikanth admitted to hospital for BP: docs

Hyderabad: Superstar Rajinikanth was on Friday admitted to Apollo Hospitals here for severe blood pressure fluctuations, the hospital said. Stating that he is "stable and resting", a release from the hospital said the actor will stay here and undergo further investigations on Saturday. Rajinikanth was shooting for a movie here. The 70-year-old has, meanwhile, tested negative for Covid. P7

### 2 minors kill 14-yr-old over financial dispute

Bengaluru: A 14-year-old boy was stabbed to death by two other minors over a financial dispute at Byatarayanapura on Friday evening. The body was lying in the middle of the road for over an hour, even as passersby were allegedly shooting videos on their mobile phones. The incident has been captured on CCTV. P7

YOUNG 'UNS

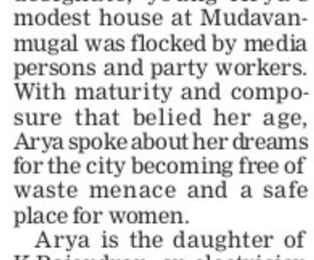
Deepti Ganapati Hegde

## Mysuru girl tops India Int'l Science Fest

K RATHNA @ Mysuru

DEEPTI Ganapati Hegde (17), a PUC I student of BASE PU College in Mysuru, has made her city proud by topping the 6th India International Science Festival (IISF-2020), under the 'Nav Bharat Nirman' domain. From over 3,000 participants, Deepti was shortlisted in the top 10, and for the finale, six participants were selected. Being the only one from Mysuru to reach the finals, she went on to win it and also bagged a cash prize of ₹25,000.

Deepti's presentation on the concept of 'Building self-reliant smart villages for inclusive growth', with a diverse smart healthcare system for digital rural empowerment, received much praise. She has developed digital therapeutic programmes for rural pregnant women, the elderly and cardiac patients at their homes. The goal of the project is to capture personal sensor data and sift it for early signs of potential exacerbations, to help guide prompt interventions into the progression of a patient. P7



Arya Rajendran

## 21-year-old set to be India's youngest mayor

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ T'Puram

TWENTY-one-year-old Arya Rajendran hailing from Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram will become the country's youngest mayor on Monday.

A second-year BSc Mathematics student of the All Saints' College, she was elected from the Thiruvananthapuram municipal corporation on a CPM ticket.

On Friday, when news broke on the CPM's Mayor-designate, young Arya's modest house at Mudavanmugal was flocked by media persons and party workers. With maturity and composure that belied her age, Arya spoke about her dreams for the city becoming free of waste menace and a safe place for women.

Arya is the daughter of K Rajendran, an electrician and branch committee member of the CPM, and Sreelatha, an LIC agent. She has an elder brother. Active in local politics, Arya is a state committee member of the Student Federation of India. She is also the state president of the Balasangham. P10

**ALMANAC TODAY**

- **Saturday:** 26/12/2020 • **Year:** Sarvari • **Ayana:** Dakshinayana
- **Ritu:** Himantha • **Masa:** Margashira • **Paksha:** Shukla • **Tithi:** Dwadashi 3:35 am
- **Nakshatra:** Bharani 10:44 am • Moon in Vrishabha Rashi • **Rahukaala:** 09:00 am to 10:30 am
- **Gulikakala:** 06:00 am to 07:30 am • **Yamaganda:** 01:49 pm to 03:26 pm

**WEATHER**

MIN 15°C | MAX 28°C

**FORECAST** Sunny

| | |
|---|---|
| Sunrise | 6.39 am |
| Sunset | 6.01 pm |
| Moonrise | 3.08 pm |
| Moonset | 3.15 am |

# Now, wildlife safaris back on city outskirts

## Trials begin in Bannerghatta National Park; conservationists still not convinced

**BOSKY KHANNA** @Bengaluru

Bengalureans eager to stalk the striped beauty and other wildlife need no longer travel all the way to the tiger reserves of Bandipur, Nagarahole, Bhadra or BRT for a wildlife safari. Come February, they can enjoy it on the city outskirts in Bannerghatta National Park (BNP).

Accepting the long-pending proposal of Jungle Lodges and Resorts (JLR), Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Wildlife, Ajai Misra gave clearance for safari on a pilot basis till May 31, 2021. Trials are on and Karnataka forest officials and JLR aim to open it on trial basis from February.

> **Elephants stop vehicles and chase them. In forests, they chase patrol vehicles. It can help check encroachments and poaching**
>
> Forest official

BNP is home to leopards, sloth bears, elephants, Indian gaurs, spotted deer, other herbivores, and a lone male tiger.

The two departments aim to use 15sqkm of the area for safari, and have chalked out a route covering Doddanankere, Sopenabetta Tower, Ragihalli, Ullesalu, safari zoo entry and deviate towards the JLR gate.

Forest staffers have started clearing weeds along the safari route, identifying vehicles which can be used, and have capped the number of visitors at 40 a day.

"Time for trials has been given only till May 31, with conditions. We want to make it an eco-tourism space. Only one vehicle is permitted during morning and evening hours. Trekking is not allowed," Misra told TNIE.

BNP Deputy Conservator of Forests BNN Murthy said trials have started and if all goes well, the safari will be introduced next month, but will be cancelled if there is any untoward incident. Forest officials say it could help control the elephant menace. "Elephants create a lot of problems," said another forester.

Conservationists and experts, however, are not convinced. They said the department is looking at commercialising untouched spaces, which will create havoc. They assert that BNP is already under a lot of pressure for encroachment, opening commercial activity will make matters worse.

"Parks like BNP warrant advanced conservation efforts to safeguard biodiversity. With Bengaluru in its vicinity, the park has experienced severe anthropogenic pressures in the past, leading to a fragmented, linear and irregular shape. In the absence of a well-defined core and buffer zone, monitoring and implementation of tourism could be a challenge. This landscape is notable for human-elephant conflict, therefore, assessing the likely impact of safaris should be considered, " Avinash Krishnan, research officer, A Rocha India said.

**DAY OF PIETY**

A woman receives communion on Christmas Day at St Patrick's Church (left); ISKCON temple in Bengaluru witnessed only a few devotees on the occasion of Vaikunta Ekadashi due to the Covid-19 pandemic | MEGHANA SASTRY, NAGARAJA GADEKAL

# Toll plazas gear up for January 1 deadline

**S LALITHA** @Bengaluru

WITH the January 1, 2021, deadline for compulsory usage of FasTag on four-wheelers passing through National Highway roads fast approaching, there is a major scramble to buy the device which permits electronic toll fee payment. The 45 toll plazas in Karnataka too are busy gearing up for D-day.

R K Suryawanshi, Regional Officer, NHAI, Karnataka, said that Point of Sale (Pos) counters had been set up at all the plazas across the country so that the tag can be easily purchased by vehicle users.

"There are four PoS set up at each plaza, two on each side. We may consider having more if required in Bengaluru," he said. Nearly 65% of vehicles which pass through highway plazas have the tag installed, Suryawanshi added.

Cars without FasTag will not be allowed to pass toll plazas from Jan 1 | EXPRESS

"Beginning January 1, vehicles which do not have the FasTag will not be allowed to cross our gates," he said. However, another official said the Centre is yet to confirm this: "We are waiting to hear the final word from the Ministry."

Sadahalli (near KIA), Electronic City Elevated Road, Doddakarenahalli (known popularly as Parle G), Hoskote, Attibele Grade Section and Bengaluru-Nelamangala section are among plazas which fall under Bengaluru area. S P Somashekhar, Manager (Technical), NHAI, Karnataka said, "Beginning Friday, marshals have been deployed at all plazas across the State. They are there to help public download the app on their phone and guide them on activating the tag on their vehicles through their phones."

Officials in State sought time to get the exact number of electronic tags purchased as they need to be collated across all banks and toll plazas.

A statement released by NHAI on Friday in New Delhi said, "The toll collection through FasTag for the first time crossed Rs 80 crore per day on December 24 with record 50 lakh fast tag transactions per day." Over 2.2 crore Fast tags have been issued across the country as on date.

# JP Park to have toy train, cycle tracks

**BOSKY KHANNA** @Bengaluru

THE BBMP has big plans for JP Park in Rajarajeshwari Nagar zone, as part of Mission 2022: a cycle track, toy train, swimming pool, badminton court, walkers' track, and what have you... As one BBMP official said, "Rejuvenation and development of a park is not just landscaping, but also involves recreational activities."

The BBMP has called for tenders to develop the Park which lists out a railway track to run a toy train, like the one at Cubbon Park. A detailed project report has been prepared for ₹17 crore, of which ₹3.54 crore is for the train track. The 70-acre park is located next to the lake, which covers four acres.

BBMP RR Nagar zonal chief engineer Vijay Kumar said the rail track is only on a small portion of the park, and the catchment area will not be disturbed. Another senior BBMP official said this has been planned at Malathahalli park too.

Citizens and activists said that concrete structures will dilute the purpose of creating and protecting lung spaces.

"BBMP should work on improving the lake and connecting it to the park. They should grow more trees and plants to make it a mini Cubbon Park. Instead, they are replicating Bal Bhavan activities everywhere," said Vikram J from RR Nagar.

**WHAT LIES BENEATH**

# *Desilting at Bellandur Lake unearths car, police in a tizzy*

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @Bengaluru

BRUHAT Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's desilting work at Bellandur Lake on Friday afternoon sent Marathahalli police into a tizzy. As the work progressed, BBMP workers and marshals at the site behind Duggalamma Temple were shocked to see a Maruti Esteem car in a broken-down condition, half-covered in silt on the lake's banks — that too, without tyres or steering wheel, but with the registration plate still attached.

Suspecting foul play, the BBMP staff alerted Marathahalli police. After a thorough search of the vehicle, the police found no body or valuables as suspected, but protocol demanded that they establish whether it was a stolen car, or was used in a crime.

A senior police officer said with the vehicle's registration number, they tracked the car's owner, a businessman from Indiranagar.

On questioning him, the police learnt that he had used the vehicle for ten years and abandoned it as it was getting old. He left it behind the temple two years ago, but could not remember the exact date. The officer said it is common to find abandoned cars in Bengaluru and outskirts.

The officer said they did not find any report in any police station of the car being stolen.

"We have asked the businessman (whose name has been withheld) to explain as to why he abandoned the car at the lake. It is sheer negligence on his part," he said, adding that they are still probing the case.

The vehicle owner told the police that he abandoned the car two years ago | EXPRESS

# Daily Starscope

**PETER VIDAL**

**26th December : Do you fancy a holiday in space? We already have tourists heading for the International Space Station. But the price is high. But some of us can remember when air travel was a rarity – and look where we are now. I am looking forward to the first gathering of astrologers way up there in space, making new forecasts for a new world!**

**ARIES** (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)

This is a moment to boast, believe in yourself and generally aim for the top. If you imagine that it is best to be humble, and to hide your talents under a stone, you will miss out. The one important condition is to avoid bad-tempered people - especially the ones who don't believe in you!

**TAURUS** (Apr. 21 - May 21)

You have long ago realised that there are situations in which the best plan is to stay still and avoid being noticed. This may be your most effective strategy unless, that is, you are prepared to turn your life upside down! It all depends on how much confidence you have - and courage!

**GEMINI** (May 22 - June 21)

You have no doubt discovered what other people have been up to, but don't imagine that you know the whole truth. This is a very useful time for travel, partly because the results will exceed your expectations. It's possible that an unexpected encounter could take your life in a new direction.

**CANCER** (June 22 - July 23)

Think about what you can do for others. Within the family it seems to be children and younger relatives who need maximum unconditional support. Your behaviour may be largely dominated by events which took place a long time ago, and memories which may be buried deep in your unconscious.

**LEO** (July 24 - Aug. 23)

You are probably unaware of just how much you can influence other people, and it's therefore very important indeed to be positive - to encourage, cajole and enthuse them, creating a sense of hope. This is in spite of the fact that you may be a little wobbly emotionally.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)

You may well have hidden fears and suspicions, perhaps because you imagine that an agreement is coming unstuck. Careful and practical action is the answer. Also, raise your spirits with pleasant day-dreams, and spend a little time planning those much-needed improvements.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)

Seen from one angle your stars are positively riotous, although social costs may spiral out of control unless you take firm action. Old friends may be on your mind, so get in touch. Steer clear of conflict; even if that does mean postponing a particular appointment.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Your stars have seldom looked more competitive. Put aside any doubts, overcome all qualms, and set out to be number one in love, at home and at work. Only accept those social taboos and constraints which suit you. And don't let everyone else know your intentions - unless you absolutely have to.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)

Life is in the balance and could swing either way, whether towards confrontation or towards great joy. The choice is yours. The main consideration, though, is always to aim for the most adventurous options, broadening your horizons and catching a glimpse of the larger picture.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)

You seem to be going through an extravagant phase and, in some cases, that may be an understatement! Domestic and family commitments could add to the monetary burden, while personal relationships are heading for an intense period. The next few weeks could bring surprises, so get ready.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)

Matrimonial and partnership affairs become even more important - if such a thing were possible. It is necessary to put your own interests to one side ever so briefly, offering your full emotional support to people you love. I hope they'll appreciate your sacrifice.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)

The one thing which really bothers you now concerns the extent to which you have been exploited. It is never pleasant to have your emotions taken for granted, but that is what seems to have happened. Perhaps you should pick the right moment and explain how you feel.

**THE PHANTOM**

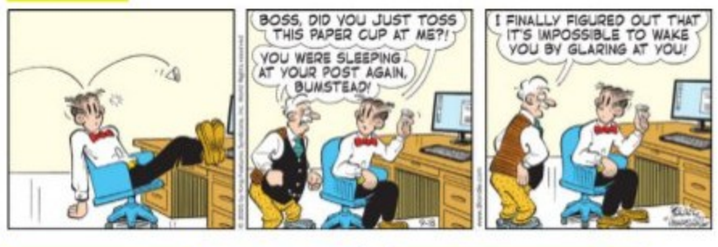
DARLING, IT'S BEEN FATE ALL ALONG! I FEEL IT!
EVEN SHE FELT IT!
IN THE ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK, WHEN, OUT OF THE BLUE, KAPRA TOOK OUR NAME!—WALKER!
SHE'S DESTINED TO SPEND HER LIFE WITH US, KIT....
TO KNOW OUR SECRETS!
"HUH?"
MM....?
Falk 10/24
NEXT: NEW ADVENTURE!

**HI AND LOIS**

I HAD A TOUGH DAY AT WORK.
BUT YOU PROMISED TO TAKE ME OUT TO DINNER TONIGHT.
HE DIDN'T PROMISE TO MAKE SCINTILLATING CONVERSATION.

**BEETLE BAILEY**

**BLONDIE**


BOSS, DID YOU JUST TOSS THIS PAPER CUP AT ME?!
YOU WERE SLEEPING AT YOUR POST AGAIN, BUMSTEAD!
I FINALLY FIGURED OUT THAT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO WAKE YOU BY GLARING AT YOU!

**LOCKHORNS**

**DENNIS THE MENACE**

Test your number crunching skill with our unique puzzle

## SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 9 | | | | | 5 | 1 | |
| | | | | 7 | | | 3 | 8 |
| | | | 3 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | 1 | 4 | | 5 |
| | | 5 | | | | 1 | | |
| 1 | | 8 | 5 | | | | | 9 |
| | | | | | 7 | | | |
| 3 | 4 | | | 8 | | | | |
| | 5 | 2 | | | | | 7 | 6 |

**EVIL**

- Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.
- Each sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing.

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| 3 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| 4 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 3 |
| 7 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 8 |
| 6 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 2 |
| 1 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| 8 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 4 |
| 2 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 7 |

**JUMBLE** — THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NGLUC

RAHDO

CLIPES

GIKSIN

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: _____ (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: OMEGA IRONY JOGGER IDIOCY
Answer: James wrote novels such as "Dubliners" and "Ulysses," and his readers — "RE-JOYCED"

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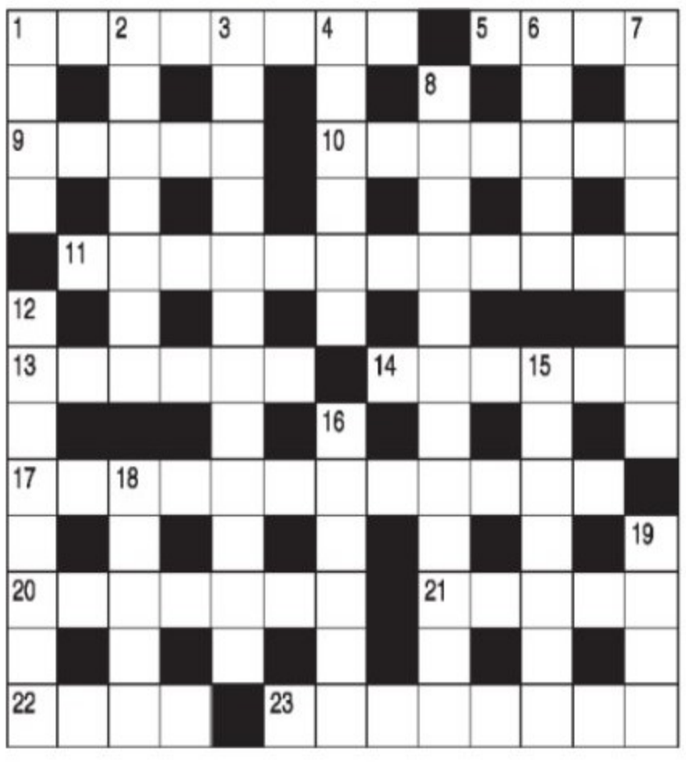
**CROSS WORD**



**ACROSS**

1 Very French to approve sin (8)
5 Brave man; he has heart of iron (4)
9 Rene's upset by expression of contempt (5)
10 I seem somehow to follow it in detail (7)
11 She was one of his heroines (5,7)
13 Periods when things look different (6)
14 A pound to one on Britain (6)
17 Key phrase? (7,5)
20 Some wear a cheerful smile in affliction (7)
21 A man will love such a greeting (5)
22 It's nonsense to call for silence (4)
23 Possibly resisted one who arranges publication (8)

**DOWN**

1 Trial sample (4)
2 Time of day when engine breaks down - about five (7)
3 Salesman's ideal coveted by musicians (7,5)
4 Minor offence (6)
6 Heather is part American (5)
7 Steak so cooked is by no means rare (8)
8 Long lane that does have a turning for headwear (3-6,3)
12 Loth to tackle anything not lined out (8)
15 Try to please? (7)
16 There's no disputing it's a form of deadly sin (6)
18 Acquires a twisted snare (5)
19 An outstanding manager (4)

**YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS**

**Across:** 1 Treadmill, 8 Alone, 9 Avocado, 10 Co-heir, 11 Censer, 12 All fours, 15 Pea green, 18 Dieted, 20 Needle, 21 Monitor, 22 Evens, 23 Headlines.

**Down:** 2 Revue, 3 Accost, 4 Moderate, 5 Lay off, 6 Cover up, 7 Depressed, 11 Carpenter, 13 Landlord, 14 Cavemen, 16 Relish, 17 Gemini, 19 Evoke.

# Zero fatality in 12 districts in K'taka in past 7 days

Fewer deaths due to more awareness, early detection, treatment

RANJANI MADHAVAN @Bengaluru

IN the last seven days, 12 districts in Karnataka have reported a 0% Covid-19 case fatality rate (CFR) while eight others have a CFR of below 1%.

TNIE spoke to experts on why some districts such as Yadgiri, Shivamogga, Ramanagara, Mandya, Haveri, Gadag, Dharwad, Davanagere, Chitradurga, Chikkamagaluru, Belagavi, Bagalkot and others have been able to keep their death rate low, while districts susch as Ballari, Chamarajanagar, Hassan, Bengaluru Rural, Koppal, Bidar, Udupi, Raichur, Kodagu and Uttara Kannada had a high CFR in the last seven days.

The number of deaths depends on the number of Covid cases being reported, and the higher the number of infections, the higher the chances of fatality, said Dr K S Satish, senior pulmonologist and member of state COVID death audit committee.

"In districts where the CFR is low, it shows that there is early access to treatment, awareness on the part of patients who are alert about symptoms of fever, Influenza Like Illness, immediate isolation on testing positive, and lack of Covid stigma, as there used to be before," Dr Satish said, adding that in districts where fatalities are still high, it is an indication of a lack of public awareness.

Fewer cases and deaths do not mean that people become complacent, lest we face a second wave, he cautioned.

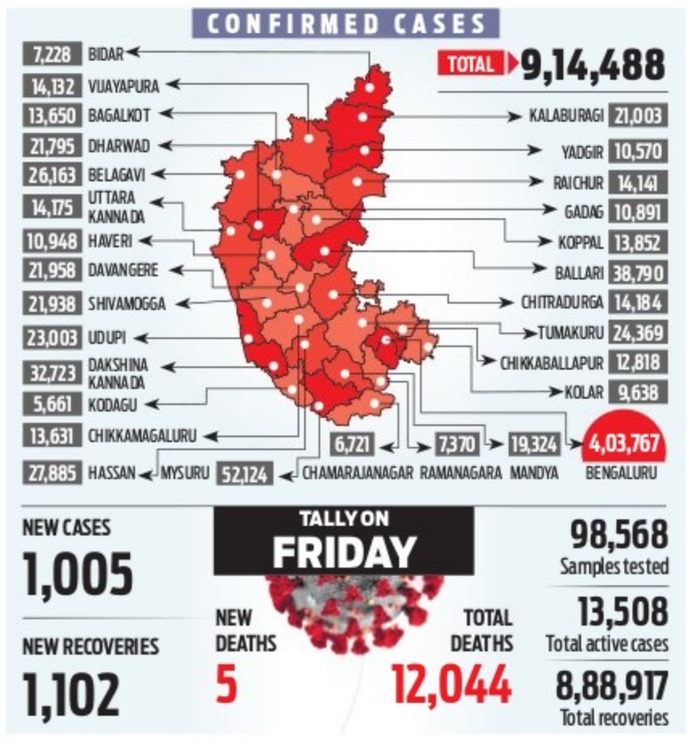
Some districts report more deaths due to a higher number of patients who travel between states, said Dr Thrilok Chandra, head of the COVID-19 Critical Care Support Unit (CCSU).

"For instance, people from Tamil Nadu come to Chamarajanagar, people from Andhra Pradesh come to Ballari, Tumakuru and Bengaluru which is a tertiary health care centre. High CFR in some districts is not an indication of poor quality of care. The numerator is low and absolute numbers are declining and have been in single digits in some districts in the past few weeks. Level of care has improved across all districts," Dr Chandra said.

Nevertheless, the CCSU is tracking cases and deaths, looking at them from both clinical and public health perspectives. On the clinical side, most hospitals use the APACHE score to assess ICU performance which helps in better understanding the patient's response to ICU care, Dr Chandra explained.

If deaths occur one or two days into hospital admission, it becomes a public health issue and factors such as delay in reporting, reference from private hospital before coming to government hospital, etc are analysed.

A daily analysis is done and reports are sent to the respective deputy commissioners and BBMP zonal heads, so they can take remedial measures.




## DETECTION

# Cough and check if you're at risk of getting Covid

IFFATH FATHIMA @Bengaluru

A NEW tool could soon be added to the list of preliminary checks used to detect Covid symptoms: A mobile app that can listen to your cough and tell you whether you may be at risk of developing Covid-19.

Developed by HCG Hospital and Wipro, the Covigilent app uses deep learning - a field within machine learning that uses algorithms inspired by the structure and function of the brain - to process up to 1,000 samples per second and produce results within five seconds. The developers claim the app - which can be downloaded free - has an accuracy of 84%. They have approached the state government seeking permission to use the app in schools and offices so that cases can be detected early.

"A smart phone would serve as a recording device and the risk categorisation handed out to the user in a matter of seconds. The app can idetify essential cough signatures, quickly, inexpensively and reliably detect high-risk patients. It can detect if you are high risk, and one can undergo Covid testing and isolation. With a second wave anticipated, the app can help with a more directed and focused approach. It would help categorize high-risk contacts, and reduce the financial burden and address limited healthcare manpower," said Dr Vishal Rao, associate dean for academics at HCG Hospital.

There are four key steps to the Covigilent app - cough detect, cough segment, Covid detect and explanation of inference. "This can also create a database that can be leveraged to continually improve model predictions," said Dr Rao.

### How to use the app

Enter your information, keep the phone 6cm away, either to your left or right side, and cough three times in a completely silent environment. Wearing a respirator or mask could give false results. The app can be downloaded at https://covidassist.wipro.com

# Genome test results of UK returnees awaited

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

AMIDST concerns over the import of the new SARS-CoV-2 strain, Karnataka is awaiting genome sequence test results of 10-15 people who tested positive after returning from the UK.

Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar said that the samples of 10-15 Covid positive people had been sent to the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences for a genome sequence test and the results would be out in two or three days. "Once the report is out, we will know whether it is the second strain, and will follow necessary procedure for treatment," he said.

He said that researchers are studying new strains in other countries and according to initial studies, the SARS-CoV-2 variant of South African origin was more intensive than the one found in the UK.

"Based on the final reports from the Union Health Minister, we will take necessary steps. I have trust in the government. Before we take any decision, we think a hundred times. Protecting the health of the people is our main priority," Sudhakar said.

Local authorities are currently tracing the primary and secondary contacts of around 2,500 people who arrived in Karnataka from the UK between November 25 to December 22 on Air India and British Airways flights, and are now spread across the state.

# NEW STRAIN UNLIKELY TO REDUCE VACCINE EFFICACY, SAY EXPERTS

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

WHILE the new strain of SARS-CoV-2 that emerged in the UK has caused concern about the implications for immunisation, manufacturers and experts say the mutation is "highly unlikely" to reduce vaccine efficiency.

Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan said during a press conference in Delhi on Thursday that the vaccines being developed are unlikely to be affected by the new mutation. "If infections occur (after inoculation), they would be milder," he said.

Karnataka Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar said there would be no impact on the Centre's plans to roll out vaccines and that the state is prepared for the immunisation programme and is awaiting vaccine approvals.

Pune-based National Institute of Virology is reportedly monitoring the new strains from other countries closely and is said to submit its data to the Indian Council of Medical Research soon.

### How the vaccines work

"Spike protein is a crown protein on the virus which comes in contact with human cells to gain entry and infect. However, the new variant has mutations in the spike protein that the three leading vaccines are targeting," said a renowned virologist who declined to be named.

The spike protein – made up of a chain of amino acids – on the surface of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes Covid-19) binds to ACE2, a type of protein on the surface of human cells. The 501st position on the chain of amino acids has changed to tyrosine (represented by the letter Y) from asparagine (represented by the letter N). So, the mutation is called N510Y, the virologist said.

Still, it is unlikely the mutation would impact vaccines developed by Moderna, Pfizer BioNTech, and Oxford-AstraZeneca. "These vaccines are made to work on a broad spectrum and produce antibodies against many regions in the spike protein, so it's unlikely that a single change would make it less effective," he said.

Bioethics researcher Anant Bhan said, "As of now, there is no indication that the vaccines will not be efficacious. Lab tests and ongoing studies should give us some data. Since mass vaccination has begun in the UK, we should find out if vaccination is able to protect against the new strain through a natural experiment. Closely watching public health surveillance and genomic surveillance would be useful."

### Vaccine technology

Meanwhile, in a recent statement, Pfizer said that when SARS-CoV-2 first emerged a year ago, it was clear there was more than one strain and that it was mutating as it spread. It said SARS-CoV-2 is an RNA virus with "exceptionally high (mutation) rates" because the enzymes it uses for replication are prone to errors. A virus survives by invading cells and using the latter's cell machinery to make copies of itself and spread.

**These vaccines work on a broad spectrum and produce antibodies against many regions in the spike protein, so it's unlikely that a single change would make it less effective**

Virologist

"One of the reasons Pfizer and BioNTech chose to utilize a mRNA platform is because of the potential for the flexibility of the technology in comparison to traditional vaccine technologies, including the ability to change the RNA sequence in the vaccine, should a strain emerge that's not covered by the current shot," Pfizer said.

What this means is: Unlike most other vaccines which introduce a weakened or or inactivated (dead) germ into our bodies, mRNA vaccines give instructions to human immune cells to make a harmless piece of a spike protein. The immune system then recognises this as foreign, and begins making antibodies to get rid of it. So in case there is a mutation in the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2, scientists can design new instructions for the mRNA vaccines (mRNA is short for messenger RNA).

Ugur Sahin, CEO of BioNTech told the media on Wednesday, "Though it is likely that the vaccines will work on the new strain, if needed, the beauty of the messenger technology is that we can directly start to engineer a vaccine which completely mimics this new mutation. We could be able to provide a new vaccine technically within six weeks."

However, senior epidemiologist and advisor to the state's Covid task force, Dr Giridhara Babu remained cautious, "Most of the vaccines are directed against the spike protein and are thought to be of broad spectrum coverage. The vaccines are being investigated for effectiveness against the mutant strains of the virus. The jury is still out."

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**ZILLA SWASTHYA SAMITI (ZSS), Jharsuguda**
Office of the CDM&PHO-cum-District Mission Director, NHM, Jharsuguda

Adv No 11551 / DMF/20 — Date: 24/12/2020

**Walk-in-Interview**

Interested candidates having requisite qualification are requested to attend the Walk-in-Interview as per the following schedule or e-mail the resume in the prescribed application form with supporting documents for the following positions under Dist. Mineral Foundation Fund to **cdmojharsuguda@gmail.com** on contractual basis for a period of 6 months with monthly negotiable remuneration subject to renewal as per requirement for smooth functioning of the **COVID-19** Hospital and ICU in DHH Jharsuguda. The **remuneration will be nonetheless very much attractive.**

| Sl. No. | Name of the Post | Vacancy | Date of Walk-in-Interview | Remuneration & other Allowance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | Pulmonary Medicine Specialist | 01 | **02.01.2021** or Any Govt. Working Day | Remuneration Negotiable & Free Accommodation |
| 02 | Anesthetist | 01 | | |
| 03 | Medical Officer (MBBS) trained in Critical Care Unit | 04 | | |

The above positions are purely temporary & can be terminated at any point of time if Govt. fulfills the vacancy. Canvassing in any form will render the candidate disqualified for the position Details of qualification, experience and TOR of each category of post along with application form can be downloaded from the district website https://jharsuguda.nic.in. Interested candidates fulfilling the criteria of eligibility as mentioned above may attend the walk-in-interview or email as per the schedule along with relevant documents (Original and Set of Photo Copy of all certificate). Candidates are requested to refer to the district official website on regular interval till finalization of the recruitment process. The number of posts may increase/decrease depending upon requirement. The undersigned reserves the right to cancel any or all the applications without assigning any reason.

Sd/- Dr. L.M. Routray,
CDM & PHO, Jharsuguda

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The general public is hereby informed that my client is intending to purchase the below mentioned Schedule property from its owners Viz., 1) Mr. IMTIAZ AHMED KHAN S/o Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Khan, R/at No.9, 1st Cross, 1st Main, Ranka Nagar, R.T. Nagar, Bangalore-560032. 2) Mr. IFTEKHAR AHMED KHAN, S/o Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Khan, R/at No.24, 26th Cross, Pipeline Main Road, J.C. Nagar, Bangalore-560086. 3) Mr. AYAZ AHMED KHAN, S/o Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Khan, R/at No.60, 'MANNATH', 1STA Cross, 2nd Main, Karnataka Layout, 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560079.

If anybody is having any objections, claims, interest, dispute for the above intended sale transaction, he/she/they may contact the undersigned with the documentary proof substantiating his/her/their objections/ claims/ details of dispute/s within ten days (10 days) from this publication, failing which my client will proceed to complete the sale transaction with the above owners as if there are no third party claims/objections/disputes in respect of the Schedule property and thereafter no claims/objections/disputes will be entertained.

SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing No.15, Formed in Sy.No.7 and 8, presently known as 'Vinayaka Layout', in Assessment No.31/18, old Khatha No. 396 and Form-B Property Register Extract SL.No.1154, (Converted site order No. B.DISC.ALN. SR.3941, Dated:03.06.1969 By the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District), Situated at White Field Village, Krishnarajapura Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore, Measuring East to West 30ft. or 9.14 Meters, North to South: 40 ft. or 12.19 Meters, in all totally measuring 1200 Sq. ft or 111.41 Sq. Meters, consisting of 800 Squares Dwelling House with RCC Building Constructed of two bedrooms, hall and kitchen, two bathrooms with portico for parking purpose and bounded as East by: Property No.14, West by : Property No.16, North by: 25 ft. Cross Road, South by : Property No.24.

**SYED JAFFER MOHIYUDDIN,** Advocate
Jaffer Associates, Lawyers and attorneys, #234, 5th Square Road, Austin Town, Bangalore-560047. PH: 8123111458
Email: advocatejaffer@gmail.com

Repco Home Finance

**REPCO HOME FINANCE LIMITED**
109, First Floor, A - Wing, Mittal Tower, M.G.Road, Bengaluru - 560001.

**TENDER - CUM - AUCTION SALE NOTICE**

Sale of Immovable Properties Mortgaged to Repco Home Finance Ltd. Under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002
Whereas **Borrower: Mr. G. Srinivas,** S/o, Gangappa, **Co-Borrower-I : Mrs. K. Shushilamma,** W/o, Gangappa, **Co-Borrower-II : Mrs. Vanajakshamma,** W/o, G. Srinivas, have borrowed money from Repco Home Finance Limited, **Bangalore Branch (now account is transferred to ARB Bangalore)** against the mortgage of the immovable property more fully described in the schedule hereunder, the company has issued a **Demand Notice** under Section 13(2) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 on **31-07-2019** calling upon them to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being vide **Loan Account No.258182000172** being **Rs. 12,30,285/-** on **09-07-2019** together with further interest, costs and expenses within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

Whereas the borrower & co-borrowers having failed to pay the amount due to the Company as called for in the said demand notice, the Company has taken possession of the secured asset more fully described in the schedule hereunder on **10-08-2020** under Section 13 (4) of the Act.

Whereas the borrowers having failed to pay the dues in full, the secured creditor, Repco Home Finance Limited has decided to sell the under mentioned secured asset in **"As is where is condition"** and **"As is what is condition"** under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rules 8 & 9 of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 for realization of the debts dues to the company. The dues of the borrower being vide **Loan Account No. 258182000172** being **Rs.14,86,563/-** as on **15-12-2020.**

DETAILS OF SALE

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date and Time of E-Auction** | **29-01-2021, 11.00 A.M -12.00 P.M** (with unlimited auto extension of 5 minutes) |
| **EMD** (10% of Reserve Price) | **Rs.2,50,400/-** (Rupees Two Lakhs Fifty Thousand and Four Hundred Only) |
| **Reserve Price** | **Rs.25,04,000/-** (Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs and Four Thousand Only) |
| **Last Date & time for submitting E -Tenders** | **28-01-2021,** 04.00 P.M |
| **Minimum Bid Increment Amount** | **Rs.10,000/-** |

**Description of Property:**

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Southern Half Portion of Site No. 01, out of Land Assessment No. 78/4, situated at Doddabidarakallu Village, Yeshwantpur Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, now within the limits of BBMP, Bangalore, measuring East to West 30 ft and North to South 22 ft totally measuring 660 Sq.ft., along with building thereon and bounded on the

**East by:** 05 X 20 ft Road and After My Remaining Property **West by:** Site No. 02

**North by:** Northern Half Portion of Site No. 1, belongs to Byregowda **South by:** Others Property

**Terms and Conditions**

The intending bidders of the property should send their bids in the prescribed tender form in a closed cover along with EMD of 10% of the reserve price by means of RTGS / NEFT / DD / Banker's Cheque drawn in favour of **"Repco Home Finance Limited"** payable at **Bengaluru** or on the website **WWW.Bankeauctions.com.** Tender form not in the prescribed format will not be accepted.

For inspection of the property the intending bidders may contact the Branch Head, Repco Home Finance Limited, **Bengaluru** Branch, on all working days between 10 A.M to 5 P.M. **Contact Nos.080–41233109 & 9986772220.**

Place: **Bengaluru**
Date: **17-12-2020**

Authorised officer
**Repco Home Finance Limited**

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY**
**TRIVANDRUM (WORKS BRANCH)**
**E-Tender Notice**
**No.V/W/TVC/11/2020 DATED 24/12/2020**

Divisional Railway Manager/Works Branch/Trivandrum Division, Trivandrum-14 for and on behalf of the President of India invites online tenders for the following works as per tender notice given in our e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderer(s)/contractor(s) to apply for e-tender for WORKS in Trivandrum Division, need to get enrolled in the e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in and only online tenders will be accepted.

**1. Description:** Divisional Engineer South – Supply of welding portion 52 Kg & 60 Kg, equipments and supervision of welding.
Approximate value (in lakh) **Rs.354.26**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.327100**
Period of completion in months: **TWELVE**

**2. Description:** Aluva Additional FOB connecting PF No.1 and 2 & 3 (balance work)
Approximate value (in lakh): **Rs.79.37**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.158800**
Period of completion in months: **SIX**

**3. Description:** Kayankulam – Trivandrum section – Elimination of major sag at Km: 185/950-186/200 UP in Varkala P.Way section
Approximate value (in lakh): **Rs.124.87**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.212400**
Period of completion in months: **TWELVE**

**4. Description:** Trivandrum Division – Provision of Multi Section Digital Axle Counters (MSDAC) in Shoranur – Ernakulam section – Construction of Goomties (Engg. Part Est. for PB Item No.1027 of 2018 – 2019)
Approximate value (in lakh): **Rs.17.13**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.34300**
Period of completion in months: **NINE**

**5. Description:** Trivandrum Sub Division: Periodical cleaning of open well, cleaning of OHT, GLRs & septic tank etc
Approximate value (in lakh): **Rs.49.90**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.99800**
Period of completion in months: **TWELVE**

**6. Description:** ZONE B – Supply of materials and execution of miscellaneous works in Trichur (excl) to Koratti Angadi (excl) in Chalakudi permanent way section
Approximate value (in lakh): **Rs.21.00**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.42000**
Period of completion in months: **TWELVE**

**7. Description:** Trivandrum Division – Deep screening of Points and Crossings by BCM in DEN/South Jurisdiction
Approximate value (in lakh): **Rs.51.09**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.102200**
Period of completion in months: **TWELVE**

**8. Description:** Repair and Maintenance of LCs in Haripad – Ambalapuzha Section (PB No.25/2020-21, Ambalapuzha-Haripad Doubling)
Approximate value (in lakh): **Rs.25.76**
Earnest Money Deposit: **Rs.51500**
Period of completion in months: **THREE**

Tender Closing date of time: **Sl.No.1 to 8: 15.01.2021 at 11.00 hrs**

Details of approximate value of tender, EMD & location are given on the e-portal www.ireps.gov.in. For Details of bid submission, please refer website portal **www.ireps.gov.in**.

**Senior Divisional Engineer/Cordn Trivandrum-14**

Follow us on : twitter.com/@GMSRailway

Repco Home Finance

**REPCO HOME FINANCE LIMITED**
109, First Floor, A - Wing, Mittal Tower, M.G.Road, Bengaluru - 560001.

**TENDER - CUM - AUCTION SALE NOTICE**

Sale of Immovable Properties Mortgaged to Repco Home Finance Ltd. Under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002
Whereas **Borrower: Mrs. M. Rabiya Qurashi,** W/o, MD. Abdhul Kaleem Qurashi, **Co-Borrower: Mr. MD. Abdul Kaleem Qurashi,** S/o, Rasheed Qurashi, have borrowed money from Repco Home Finance Limited, **Bangalore Branch (now account is transferred to ARB Bangalore)** against the mortgage of the immovable property more fully described in the schedule hereunder, the company has issued a Demand Notice under Section 13(2) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 on **30-08-2017** calling upon them to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being vide **Loan Account No. 2581870000274** being **Rs. 38,26,861/- on 17-08-2017** together with further interest, costs and expenses within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

Whereas the borrower & co-borrowers having failed to pay the amount due to the Company as called for in the said demand notice, the Company has taken possession of the secured asset more fully described in the schedule hereunder on **19-01-2018** under Section 13 (4) of the Act.

Whereas the borrowers having failed to pay the dues in full, the secured creditor, Repco Home Finance Limited has decided to sell the under mentioned secured asset in **"As is where is condition"** and **"As is what is condition"** under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rules 8 & 9 of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 for realization of the debts dues to the company. The dues of the borrower being vide **Loan Account No. 2581870000274** being **Rs.60,82,565/-** as on **14-12-2020.**

DETAILS OF SALE

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date and Time of E-Auction** | **22-01-2021, 11.00 A.M -12.00 P.M** (with unlimited auto extension of 5 minutes) |
| **EMD** (10% of Reserve Price) | **Rs.4,95,500/-** (Rupees Four Lakhs Ninety Five Thousand and Five Hundred Only) |
| **Reserve Price** | **Rs.49,55,000/-** (Rupees Forty Nine Lakhs and Fifty Five Thousand Only) |
| **Last Date & time for submitting E -Tenders** | **21-01-2021,** 04.00 P.M |
| **Minimum Bid Increment Amount** | **Rs.10,000/-** |

**Description of Property:**

**Schedule A:**

**Item No. 1:**

All that piece and parcel of the immovable Residential property bearing site No. 1/A, Katha No. 106, situated at Dasarahalli Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, East to West 70 Feet, North to South 40 Feet.

**Bounded by:-**

**East by:** Private Property, **West by:** 30 Feet Road, **North by:** Site No.1, **South by:** Site No.1/A,

**Item No. 2:**

All that piece and parcel of the immovable Residential property bearing site No. 1/B, Katha No. 106, situated at Dasarahalli Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, East to West 70 Feet, North to South 40 Feet.

**Bounded by:-**

**East by:** Private Property, **West by:** 30 Feet Road, **North by:** Site No.1/A, **South by:** Site No.2,

**Schedule B:**

Undivided share in the land comprised in the Schedule A Property equivalent to 231.14 Square Feet,

**Schedule C:**

Two Bedrooms residential Apartment with Vitrified Flooring bearing Flat No 4B, in the Third Floor, of the building known as "AASHIYANA" apartments constructed on the Schedule 'A' Property having a super builtup area of 1132 Sq.Ft. Along with one car parking space, vide BBMP Limits Katha No. 1563/1016/106/1A/1B/4B.

**Bounded as:-**

**East by:** Entrance, **West by:** Open Space, **North by:** Open Space, **South by:** Flat No. A-4,

**Terms and Conditions**

The intending bidders of the property should send their bids in the prescribed tender form in a closed cover along with EMD of 10% of the reserve price by means of RTGS / NEFT / DD / Banker's Cheque drawn in favour of **"Repco Home Finance Limited"** payable at **Bengaluru** or on the website **WWW.Bankeauctions.com.** Tender form not in the prescribed format will not be accepted.

For inspection of the property the intending bidders may contact the Branch Head, Repco Home Finance Limited, **Bengaluru** Branch, on all working days between 10 A.M to 5 P.M. **Contact Nos. (080) 41233109 & 99867 72220.**

Place: **Bengaluru**
Date: **15-12-2020**

Authorised officer
**Repco Home Finance Limited**

YOUR GUIDE TO SPICY LIVING
INDULGE
Every Friday with THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Disgruntled BJP MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal said, "Apart from cabinet expansion, the state might witness a big political development on Makara Sankranti, before the visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Vijayapura."

# Candidates in soup for using party symbols

Violation of model code of conduct during Gram Panchayat polls may lead to their disqualification, say officials

ASHWINI M SRIPAD
@Bengaluru

THE strategy of some Gram Panchayat poll candidates to use symbols of prominent political parties and photos of known political leaders to garner votes may land them in trouble. Nearly half of all cases of model code of conduct violation registered by the State Election Commission relate to these infractions, poll panel officials revealed to *The New Indian Express*.

Cases have been registered against many contestants across the state, and the violation is serious as Gram Panchayat elections are not fought on party symbols. These candidates may even face disqualification if found guilty, warned poll panel officials.

State Election Commission officials said that they have registered around 40 cases of model code of conduct violation | EXPRESS

The first phase of Gram Panchayat polls was held on December 22 and the second phase is scheduled for Sunday.

State Election Commission officials said that they have registered around 40 cases of model code of conduct violation and 477 cases related to Excise Act. The candidates under scrutiny seem to be associated with all parties and have used photos of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, local MLAs and district in-charge ministers, former CMs H D Kumaraswamy and Siddaramaiah, KPCC president D K Shivakumar and former PM H D Deve Gowda, they said.

As per the list available with The New Indian Express, candidates from Kodagu, Yadgir, Ramanagar, Kalburgi, Haveri and other districts have used photos and symbols on their pamphlets, posters and banners. The officials have also booked those candidates who have shared posts on Facebook or WhatsApp identifying themselves with political parties.

State Election Commissioner B Basavaraju said, "It is not the first time that such incidents have occurred. But this year, we have been stringent and that is why more cases have been detected."

He said that by using party symbols and leaders' photos, the very purpose of Gram Panchayat elections is lost as they are not supposed to be fought along party lines.

"We had instructed all deputy commissioners to book cases against candidates for violating this basic rule as it is a serious violation," he added.

(Left to right) Mithun Rai, H S Manjunath and Nalapad Haris

# KPCC Youth chief to be elected via e-voting

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) is likely to hold online elections for the president and other office-bearers of their youth wing this year, due to the pandemic. The election is expected to be held before the second week of January.

Similar polls were conducted for the Telangana Youth Congress recently.

The post fell vacant in March 2020, when Basana Gouda Badarli's term ended. Nine months on, the AICC is in a dilemma whether to conduct elections to the post, or appoint a president to the party's youth wing in Karnataka.

In March, the AICC appointed DK Shivakumar as KPCC President and working presidents, but did not appoint other office-bearers.

At present, there are 6.5 lakh voters who are eligible to elect the KPCC Youth president in Karnataka. A senior Congress leader told *The New Indian Express*, on condition of anonymity, that there are many aspirants to the post, including National Students' Union of India (NSUI) president in Karnataka HS Manjunath, MLA NA Haris's son Nalapad, former minister MR Seetharam's son Raksha Ramaiah, three-time Youth Congress district president of Dakshina Kannada Mithun Rai and others. While Manjunath is close to Shivakumar, Haris is lobbying for his son.

> Now that they have called for an interview, they will decide after interacting with the aspirants whether to hold elections or nominate a president
>
> Sources

The aspirants have been called to New Delhi on December 28 for an interview, where they will face a panel which includes Indian Youth Congress President BV Sreenivas.

Sources in the Congress said that though Rahul Gandhi is in favour of elections, a section of party leaders wants the KPCC Youth president to be nominated. "Now that they have called for an interview, they will decide after interacting with the aspirants whether to hold elections or nominate a president," sources said.

POLL RACE

## Angadi's daughter at political event adds to buzz

NAUSHAD BIJAPUR @ Belagavi

THE maiden entry of Shradha Angadi, daughter of former Union Minister of Railways Suresh Angadi, at a local political event in Belagavi on Friday, has lent credence to speculation that the BJP may field her in the coming bypoll for the Belagavi Lok Sabha seat, which Angadi represented. None from the four-member Angadi family had taken part in a political event so far after his death a few months ago.

Shradha, who is the daughter-in-law of state Industries Minister Jagadish Shettar, is believed to have his strong support for making it into big-time politics. There has been pressure on the state party leadership for the past few months from prominent politicians and relatives to field her for the Lok Sabha bypoll.

After attending a programme organised by the party to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Belagavi on Friday, Shradha declined to comment on whether she was prepared to contest the bypoll, but said her family would like to strengthen political connections with party leaders in the days to come.

The BJP has a string of prominent local leaders who are aspiring to contest the bypoll, including well-known doctor Girish Sonwalkar, advocate M B Zirli, state government's representative in New Delhi, Shankargouda Patil, and several others.

According to sources, the party is keen to have a candidate from the dominant Lingayat community, irrespective of whether someone from late Suresh Angadi's family is fielded or not. Dr Girish Sonwalkar is being strongly supported by a section of leaders, including the Jarkiholi brothers, but whether he gets the support from party's top leadership remains to be seen.

Union Minister late Suresh Angadi's daughter Shradha Angadi attends a political event in Belagavi on Friday | EXPRESS

## Shah may announce Vijayanagar dist: BJP leaders

KIRAN BALANNANAVAR
@Ballari

DURING his two-day visit to Karnataka, Union Home Minister Amit Shah is likely to tour the world heritage site Hampi. The local administration is expected to start the groundwork to beef up security and other arrangements soon. A local BJP leader said that the party expects Shah to also announce the formation of new Vijayanagar district.

"We have been waiting for the announcement of the new district for a long time. The date of filing objections will end by January 14. We hope Shah visits Hampi and announces its formation," he added.

A district administration official said, "Shah is expected to tour Karnataka from January 16 to 17. He will participate in a government function in Hosapete and is expected to visit Hampi as well. However, we are waiting for a final confirmation from the government."

The official said, "We will cooperate with the minister's security personnel. We will ensure that tourists are not affected during his visit."

Local BJP members said Shah wanted to visit Hampi for quite some time.

"He will visit the Rapid Action Force (RAF) Training Centre at Bhadravathi in Shivamogga district. But his plan to visit Ballari district is not confirmed yet," said a local BJP leader from Ballari.

Locals also hope that Shah will visit Anjanadri Hill.

> *Shah is expected to tour Karnataka from January 16 to 17. He will participate in a government function in Hosapete and is expected to visit Hampi as well*
>
> District administration official

## Core committee meeting on Jan 2

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

MEANWHILE, BJP State Secretary Ravi Kumar insisted that the cabinet expansion will happen after Sankranti.

The BJP is holding its core committee and executive meetings at Shivamogga on January 2 and 3 where it is expected to finalise the list of candidates for the upcoming Assembly bypolls in Basavakalyan and Maski and Lok Sabha by-elections in Belagavi.

Sources in the party indicated that the gram panchayat election results will be out by then and the party will also discuss about these issues along with taluk and zilla panchayat elections that are scheduled in April or May 2021.

HUNT ON

## Belagavi LS bypoll: Section of Cong wants to field Ashok Pujari

NAUSHAD BIJAPUR @Belagavi

WITH chances of BJP retaining the Belagavi Lok Sabha seat getting brighter given the way it has emerged as a strong force in the region, the Congress is faced with the task of finding a potential candidate to contest the bypoll.

Even as the committee of top Congress leaders set up to select a suitable candidate for the bypoll has shortlisted three names, it has come to light that a section of the party has suggested the name of Ashok Pujari, a popular politician from Gokak.

> I always want to fight for a change in the system in Gokak. Till I stay in politics, I will continue to bring in changes in Gokak
>
> Ashok Pujari, JDS leader

What may work in Pujari's favour is not just his popularity, but also his Lingayat tag as the community has a large number of voters in the Belagavi parliamentary constituency. Pujari, who is now with the JDS, lost the last two Assembly elections from Gokak. As a BJP leader, he was defeated by Ramesh Jarkiholi, who was with Congress then. In the bypoll that followed for the same seat after Jarkiholi switched over to BJP, Pujari, who had joined JDS by then, lost again. Pujari had crossed over to JDS prior to the bypoll refusing to accept a chairman's post of a local body offered by the BJP.

The Congress is yet to offer him a ticket, but many in the party indicated that they are ready to rally behind him if he is fielded. Pujari told *TNIE* that he is a loyal leader of JDS and his main aim is to change the corrupt and dominant political system that has existed in Gokak for a long time. "I always want to fight for a change in the system in Gokak. Till I stay in politics, I will continue to bring in changes in Gokak," he said.

But, he said, he will give a serious thought to any offer coming from the Congress. "No one from the party has contacted me yet," he added.

The Congress is still hunting for a candidate as party working president Satish Jarkiholi is unwilling to contest, despite pressure from the party's top leadership. Though the party has several young probables, a section of leaders is keen to field a "winnable" candidate against the formidable BJP, sources said.

# BJP OPEN FOR ALLIANCE WITH JDS IN MYSURU, FIRM ON MAYOR'S POST

Mysuru-Kodagu MP Prathap Simha, MLC A H Vishwanath and others felicitate a group of farmers on the birth anniversary of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, in Mysuru on Friday | UDAYSHANKAR S

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mysuru

WITH BJP and JDS realigning to keep Congress out of power at the Mysuru City Corporation, the saffron party has opened its doors for such an alliance, provided it gets the mayor's post.

As the sitting JDS Mayor, Tasneem, is to demit office on January 15, BJP MP Prathap Simha said that his party is firm on wresting power and the mayor's post at the MCC, in the interest of overall development of the city.

He said that BJP is the single-largest party at MCC and invited all corporators to extend support to 22 BJP members. "The BJP is in power at the Centre and state. The same party ruling in the corporation will give a fillip to development works," he added.

He pointed out that the BJP did not get the mayor's post in the previous Council and had to be content with the deputy mayor's post. "But this time, we are firm on the mayor's post," he asserted.

JDS corporators, meanwhile, met at the mayor's house and discussed recent political developments. They alleged that while they have extended support, there was no cooperation from the Congress and accused Congressmen of insulting the Mayor.

City JDS president Chaluve Gowda said that they have gathered the opinion of members and will pass it on to party top leaders, who will take the final decision on supporting Congress or BJP.

### Upset over party's stand on APMC Act: Datta

Shivamogga: Former MLA and JDS leader YSV Datta on Friday said that he is upset with his party supporting 'anti-farmer' laws in the legislature, and added that the party needed to take a consistent stand on various issues, including the APMC and Karnataka Land Reforms Acts. Datta told the media that the JDS was built on values such as social justice and secularism. "BJP's values never matched with that of JDS," he said. "JDS supremo H D Deve Gowda always had a consistent stand and we all accepted his leadership. The party needs to have an independent and consistent stand. If not, the party will lose its credibility in front of people," he said. Commenting on the chances of a BJP-JDS coalition, he said there is no question of the party merging with BJP at any cost.

## Unhappy leaders can quit: JDS prez

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Hassan

PARTY MLAs who are unhappy with the JDS and its leaders can resign and join any political party, State JDS president **HK Kumaraswamy** said here on Friday. The party does not tolerate anti-party activities, and those who were targeting party leaders are free to quit, or action would be taken against them, he added.

Addressing a press conference, Kumaraswamy, who is Sakleshpur MLA, said the State government should announce reservation for the posts of president and vice-president of gram panchayats. The government delays reservation so as to take advantage of the situation, he added.

The JDS will not merge with any other party, and leaders will start touring the State after January 15 to strengthen the party, he said.

Kumaraswamy also said the government should withdraw the Kasturirangan report on the Western Ghats, in the interest of farmers of the Malnad.

# Do not know how much the experiment will help me, says farmer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

CO-OPERATION Minister S T Somashekhar said that the amendments will allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere. But Manjanna, a farmer from Tumakuru, said, "I don't know how much the amendment will help me. I have entered into a contract with private parties and they come to my field and take the yield. I am doing this for years and the new amendment may not matter much to me."

Raghu, another farmer from Tumkauru, is also of similar opinion. "I sell my products both at the APMC and outside. I go to the 'santhe' (fair) very often and sell my produce there too."

Meanwhile, C R Shankar, the president of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha of Channarayapatna taluk, welcomed the government's move. "The amendment made to the Act will make lives of farmers easier. Farmers, who have been in the clutches of middlemen for ages, will be freed and the amendment helps us decide the price of our produces and it will help farmers financially," he felt.

Farmers taking part in the the Kisan Samman Diwas held at APMC Market in Yeshwanthpur, Bengaluru, on Friday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

A total of 1,148 people from the United Kingdom have returned to Andhra Pradesh in the last one month and 1,040 of them have been traced so far and efforts are on to trace the remaining 90

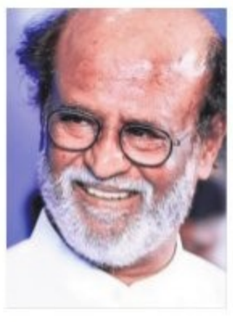
# Superstar Rajini hospitalised, condition stable

## Acror in Hyderabad since 10 days for the shooting of his forthcoming film, Annatthe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Hyderabad

SUPERSTAR Rajinikanth was admitted to the Apollo Hospitals in Jubilee Hills on Friday morning, following severe fluctuations in his blood pressure. According to a press release by the hospital, the actor's health condition is stable.

The actor, who recently turned 70, has been in Hyderabad for the past 10 days for the shooting of his forthcoming film, Annatthe. A couple of persons working on the movie's set had tested positive for Covid-19 after which Rajinikanth also got tested on December 22 and his report came back negative. Since then he isolated himself.



However, even though Rajinikanth did not have any symptoms of Covid-19, his blood pressure showed severe fluctuations which required further medical evaluation. For this, he was admitted to the hospital.

The Apollo Hospitals in its press release on Friday morning said, "He will be investigated and monitored closely in the hospital till his blood pressure settles down before being discharged. Apart from fluctuating blood pressure and exhaustion, he does not have any other symptoms and is hemodynamically stable".

Later in the evening, the hospital said, "Mr Rajinikanth is being monitored closely and medications to control his blood pressure are being carefully titrated. He will remain in the hospital tonight (Friday night) and undergo further investigations tomorrow (Saturday). He is stable and is resting."

The bulletin added, "Family and treating doctors have requested all well-wishers to avoid visiting the hospital as he is not being allowed to meet any visitors. His daughter (Aishwarya) is with him."

The actor's personal doctor and other family members will be arriving in Hyderabad late on Friday to be with him.

Just at the start of this month, Rajinikanth had announced that he would launch a new political party in January, 2021, ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu.

Telangana Governor, Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan tweeted on Friday evening saying that she called up the hospital to inquire about Rajinikanth's health condition and wished him a speedy recovery.

**FLOOD EFECT**

Following the devastating flood in Hyderabad in October, the city limps back to normal. Floodwater remains stagnant in various parts of the city, including Osman Nagar, restricting the lives of residents | S SENBAGAPANDIYAN

# Reservation in promotions: HC issues notice to K'taka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

The Karnataka High Court issued notice to the State and Central governments on a petition questioning the amendment to Article 371(J), of the Constitution which provides reservation in promotion for people from the Hyderabad-Karnataka region with retrospective effect.

Justice R Devdas issued the notice after hearing the petition filed by C K Justus, an assistant engineer, which sought the striking down of the Karnataka Public Employment (Reservation in appointment for Hyderabad-Karnataka region) amendment order published in 2013 in relation to identification of posts by the Karnataka Power Corporation Limited.

Referring to KPCL, which plans to fill up promotional vacancies based on the reservation in question, the petitioner stated that Article 371(J) of the Constitution was inserted through the Constitution (98th amendment) Act, 2012. On the strength of this amendment, the president of India entrusted certain responsibilities to the governor of Karnataka who has issued certain rules to provide for reservation in favour of people from Hyderabad-Karnataka region. With respect to reservation provided under Art 371 J, the concept of backlog in promotional posts, consequential seniority and retrospective promotions are impermissible in law, the petitioner added.

# Air passenger traffic taking off, but slowly

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

THE Kempegowda International Airport, (KIA) in Bengaluru has recorded nearly 13 lakh flyers, both domestic and international, in November. This is in line with the month on month (MoM) increase in patronage recorded at airports across the country.

Statistics from the Airports Authority of India (AAI) reveal that 1,35,67,808 air passengers flew from airports across the country, which is a 56.5 per cent decrease for the same period last year. But still, there is some optimism, as compared there has been an increase of 24,000 passengers over October when 1,11,70,366 passengers flew.

The figures are expected to see a further increase in December as the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has permitted airlines to operate up to 80 per cent of their fleet which existed before Covid struck the country. The festive season is also expected to give a boost.

**Passengers at Karnataka airports**

| Airport | November | October |
|---|---|---|
| Bidar | 1,125 | 1,280 |
| Kalaburagi | 6,540 | 5,828 |
| Mysuru | 8,146 | 6,981 |
| Hubballi | 13,702 | 8,615 |
| Belagavi | 29,568 | 26,183 |
| Mangaluru | 78,486 | 53,566 |
| Bengaluru | 12,99,444 | 11,46, 474 |

Source: Airports Authority of India

The data reveals that Bengaluru had 12,99,444 passengers, an increase of nearly 1.5 lakh as compared to 11,46,474 passengers the previous month. However, when compared to the corresponding period last year, it has gone down by 55.1%. In November 2019, KIA had 28,93,291 people flying out.

All the seven airports across Karnataka have shown a minor growth over the previous month. Of them, Hubballi and Mangaluru airports stand out as they have a 50 per cent improvement (see box). The Mangaluru International Airport recorded 78,484 passengers in November as compared to 53,566 in October, while Hubballi had 13,702 passengers compared to 8,615 last month.

Of all the airports, the Belagavi airport is the only one that is set to near its pre-Covid level in passenger traffic, reveals AAI figures. It had 29,568 passengers in November this year as compared to 29,640 flyers in November last year.

# Trying to save son, man meets watery grave

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Udupi

A 43-year-old man, identified as Mahesh, drowned near St Mary's Island off Malpe coast on Thursday. Hailing from Kanakapura near Bengaluru, he had come to St Mary's Island with his family. He drowned while playing in the water along with his kids, it is said. Though rescue boat staff tried to save him, he died on the way to the hospital.

Sources said that Mahesh, a software engineer, had planned a trip to Udupi. His sons, studying in Grades 8 and 3, were playing in the water, while one among them was hit by a large wave. In a bid to rescue his son, Mahesh went forward in the sea and got washed away.

## CRIME PATROL

### 2 stab teen to death over financial row

Bengaluru: A 14-year-old boy was stabbed to death by two minors over a financial dispute at Byatarayanappura on Friday evening. The body was lying in the middle of the road for more than an hour and passersby, instead of rushing him to hospital, were shooting videos on their mobile phones, it is said. The deceased, hailed from Kalaburagi. He and his two friends had gone to do some small work at a construction site and were paid at the end of it. The fight was over sharing the money. The two friends, in a fit of rage, stabbed him five times with a knife and fled the scene. Passersby noticed the victim bleeding and alerted the police, who reached the spot an hour later. The accused too are from Kalaburagi and the hunt is on for them, the police said.

### 2 drug peddlers held, 104 kg ganja seized

Bengaluru: The Kempegowda Nagar police on Thursday arrested two drug peddlers and seized 104 kg ganja worth ₹50 lakh. The accused were caught red-handed while carrying ganja in an autorickshaw. However, one of their associates managed to escape, the police said. The arrested is Venkataramana (38) and Muneer Khan,(37), both hail from Kolar. Police said based on a tip-off, they chased the auto and nabbed the accused. One of their associates, Alam Pasha, fled and the other two were taken into custody. They confessed to have bought the ganja from Visakhapatnam and said they were asked to distribute the same during NYE events. "We recovered details of some pub owners and are verifying their phone call records to nab those involved in the racket," police said.

# USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE HEALTHCARE FOR POOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

DEEPTI has also developed a device in the form of a smart band to be worn on the wrist, which can measure 10 different parameters in real-time, along with certain Covid symptoms like basic body temperature, BPM, cough symptoms, etc. The band can be coupled with a mobile app that receives data from it and shares the same with a cloud server. The cloud-based AI engine uses state-of-the-art machine learning algorithms in early prediction of heart failure exacerbation, cardiac arrhythmias for heart patients, and other symptoms for the antenatal care of pregnant women.

Whenever the AI agent predicts something is wrong, it sends emergency alert notifications to the family members, friends, doctor and ambulance, along with the patient's current location, which is helpful in providing quick medical attention. This technology can be used in a remote-monitoring and disease-surveillance, and is built using Internet of Medical Things (IoMT), MEMS and NLP.

Speaking to TNIE, Deepti opined, "Healthcare has become a luxury for the poor, and the situation has only worsened with the Covid situation. Rural healthcare is one of the biggest challenges facing the Union Health Ministry. With more than 70 per cent of the population living in rural areas with meagre health facilities, the mortality rate from disease is on the rise."

"People in rural areas generally have less access to healthcare than their urban counterparts. It's very important that the rural healthcare system be digitalised, and we need to come out with more innovative solutions. A health monitoring system that tracks bio-vital data, coupled with modern-day technologies like AI, is the need of the hour. The wearable technology that I am working on can be implemented on a rental basis with minimal charge; for instance, the band for pregnant women could be lent for a period of 7-8 months till delivery for Rs 300," she added.

IISF 2020 is an integral part of India's long-term vision to develop the spectrum of scientific temper in the country and abroad. The 6th IISF 2020 was jointly organised by the Department of Biotechnology of the Government of India, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences, virtually, which saw over 10 lakh delegates from around the world.

# Guidelines for New Year's Eve in two days

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"IT was very embarrassing for the police department, which imposed Section 144 across the state over the night curfew. Even the media reported the do's and don'ts as per police orders on the night curfew. But in the evening, the CM declared that night curfew was withdrawn. Police officers had held several meetings to discuss the enforcement of the night curfew on Wednesday and Thursday," the officer said, on condition of anonymity.

The senior officer said Bommai on Friday held a meeting with top police officials on issuing revised guidelines.

"So we are issuing revised guidelines according to the Home minister's directives in another two days," he said, but hoped it wouldn't end in another embarrassment for the department.

# Dr Padma 2nd woman to head NIMHANS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

PROF M V Padma Srivastava's appointment as the Director, National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences goes through the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).

Dr Padma is the second woman director after Dr M Gourie Devi, who was director/ vice- chancellor of NIMHANS from 1997 for five years. She succeeds Dr G Gururaj, senior professor of Epidemiology, who was in-charge director in October for a period of three months, or till the appointment of a new director.

**DIGITAL UPLIFT**

# *1.55 lakh govt college students to get free tablets*

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

ABOUT 1.55 lakh students studying in government engineering, graduation and polytechnic colleges will get free tablets, said P Pradeep, Commissioner, Department of Collegiate Education.

He was a panelist on the discussion 'Global Level Preparation in Higher Education', organised as part of 'Good Governance Day' to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, on Friday.

Answering a question by IISc scientist Prof. HS Jamadagni, who moderated the discussion, Pradeep said the government had decided to provide free tablets to students of the current academic year, to encourage digital learning during the pandemic and to help students. "Though online classes will end and regular classes will begin, Deputy Chief Minister Dr CN Ashwath Narayan intends to make our students technologically ready as per global standards," he said.

"In the current academic year, tablets will be provided to first-year degree students of 430 colleges, first, second and third-year engineering students of 14 colleges, and first and second-year polytechnic students of 87 colleges. Each tablet will be procured at Rs 10,000 and the total estimation is Rs 155.40 crore. In case the tablets are not compatible for engineering students, education loans will be raised to procure tablets with advanced versions," Pradeep said, adding that the department had held meetings with telecom companies and resolved network issues in rural areas.

**GOOD ENGLISH A MYTH?**

In another discussion on 'Beyond Bengaluru', Krishnadas Unni, Executive Director of IBM, said that language was no more a barrier, and a basic skill set is expected of employees.

"A degree holder of accountancy from Mandya or Maddur can talk with the CFO of a European company if he has a basic skill set in his subject. It is a myth to say that good English communication is essential to get employed and to have a bright career in corporate companies. What MNCs seek in employees is a basic skill set," Unni said. He said there is plenty of talent and dedication in aspirants of Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

**EXPRESS READ**

### Covid vaccination dry run in AP, 125 to get a shot

Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh is one of the four states selected by the Centre for dry run of Covid-19 vaccination on December 28 and 29 and it will be held in Krishna district, said Health Commissioner Katamaneni Bhaskar on Friday. Bhaskar clarified that no vaccine shots will be given to those selected for vaccination trials and only the data of the selected will be entered in the Co-Win website on those two days.

**NOTICE**

1. A Major Disciplinary Proceedings were instituted against Shri M. Muchiram, Skilled, Emp No 20281, C. No 204, NRW, Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam, under Rule 14 of CCS (CC&A) Rules, 1965, vide ASD(V) Charge Memo PES/8401/20281"dated 13 Jul 18 for remaining absent from duty unauthorizedly from 28 Aug 17 to till the date of issue of Charge Memorandum ie 13 Jul 18. Since Shri M Muchiram, Skilled, Emp.No 20281, has failed to acknowledge the Charge Memo, a Notice was published in "The New Indian Express" in English on 21 Jul 19, directing him to report for duty or Show Cause as to why further action should not be taken against him as per rules 2. Since, no response has been received from individual, the Competent Disciplinary Authority considered not reasonably practicable to hold an inquiry under relevant rules. Accordingly, taken recourse to Rule 19(ii) of CCS (CC&A) 1965 and reasons for dispensing with inquiry was recorded vide ASD(V) Memo PES/8401/20281 dated 29 Nov 19, which was forwarded to individual's address & the same was returned undelivered by Postal Authorities with remarks. 3. The Disciplinary Authority considered the case on its merits and finding Shri M. Muchiram, guilty of charges imposed a penalty of Removal from Service, which shall not be a disqualification for future employment under the Government vide ASD(V) Order PES/8401/20281 dated 08 Jan 20 which was forwarded to his residential address and the same was returned undelivered by Postal Authorities with remarks. 4. Therefore, it is for information of all concerned that, Shri M. Muchiram, was imposed upon penalty of Removal from Service, which shall not be a disqualification for future employment under the Government, vide ASD(V) Order PES/8401/20281 dated 08 Jan 20.

Visakhapatnam
Date : December, 20

**Admiral Superintendent**
**Naval Dockyard (V)**

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**
CHANGE OF NAME

**AFFIDAVIT**
**I, Prajval Nagaraj,** S/o. Nagaraj H. G. R/at No. 403, Sri Sapthagiri Residency (FRF-204), 2nd Main, 2nd Cross, Near BET Convent, BEML Layout 3rd Stage, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bangalore - 560 098 state that in 10th Marks Card my name has been mentioned as **Prajwal Nagaraj** and in Passport mentioned as **Prajwal Nagraj** whereas in Aadhar Card and other documents my name is entered as **Prajval Nagaraj.** Hence, I state that my names assigned as **PRAJVAL NAGARAJ, PRAJWAL NAGARAJ and PRAJWAL NAGRAJ** are one and same and pertaining to me only vide affidavit dated 23.12.2020 sworn before Notary K. V. Prema Kumari, Bangalore

**CHANGE OF NAME**
I, **PREM KUMAR**, S/o. Raja Mani P., Residing at No. 55, 3rd Cross, Cholurpalya, Bangalore - 560 023, do hereby confirm that, in my age of 27 years, have changed my name from **PREM KUMAR** to **ABDUL KAREEM.** Vide affidavit dated 25.02.2012 sworn before Advocate & Notary Syed Ahamed Pasha, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**
I, **Mr. CH BALAVENKATESWARULU**, S/o. Mr. Challa Venkateswarulu, Aged about 45 years, presently residing in No. 336, Govt. School, Vasureddy Building, Munnekolala, Marathahalli Post, Bangalore - 560 037, have changed my name from **Mr. CH BALAVENKATESWARULU** to **Mr. CH BALAVENKATESH.** Vide affidavit dated 24.12.2020 sworn before Advocate & Notary A.R. Muneer Ahmed, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**
I, **Parmeshwari Devi**, W/o. JC 414224Y Sub Trilok Singh son of Late Sh Rajendra Singh, permanent Resident of Vill-Shivalik Enclave Lane-02, Kargi Garnt, PO-Banzarawala, Tehsil-Sadar, District-Dehradun (UK), Pin Code 248001, presently residing at R.T. Nagar, Bangalore, do hereby declare that **Parmeswari Devi** and **Parmeshwari Devi** both the names pertain to one and the same person. Now I have changed my name to **Parmeshwari Devi,** due to wrong entered in my Husband's service document that my date of birth is **15 May 1980.** Vide affidavit dated 13.12.2020 sworn before Advocate & Notary M.S Ballal, Bengaluru.

# EDITORIAL

"Because of wars, climate change, the use of hunger as a weapon and the pandemic, 270 million people are marching toward starvation. Failure to address their needs will cause a hunger pandemic which will dwarf the impact of Covid"

David Beasley

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

## RETRO TAX ROW SHOWS POOR POLICY, DREADFUL GOVERNANCE

Two back-to-back losses rarely provide fertile ground for a home run, unless the winning formula is changed. That's true of sports as well as cross-country arbitrations. The Indian government, having lost two tax disputes at international tribunals, should take note. In September, we first lost the decade-old tax arbitration case between Vodafone and the Department of Income Tax, which demanded ₹22,000 crore retrospective taxes. Three months later, we lost another tax dispute to Cairn Energy and the country has to pay ₹8,000 crore in damages. Those with the knowledge of India's retrospective tax regime will agree that moving on would have won praise for the government. Instead, sticking to shoe leather statecraft, India yet again challenged the Vodafone ruling in Singapore. This is both poor policy and dreadful governance.

It all began in 2012, when the then UPA government amended the Finance Act to circumvent the Supreme Court's ruling favouring Vodafone and allowing retrospective taxation. The move was considered investor-unfriendly, impacting investments and business sentiment. It created uncertainty regarding public policy and taxation laws, and encouraged taxpayer harassment. In 2015, the NDA government wasted no time in tossing retrospective taxation into the bin. While this was a welcome relief, the joy was short-lived as tax sleuths doggedly pursued past cases at international fora. At least now, authorities should give up before the country's image is tarnished beyond repair.

One may argue that the objective was to mobilise funds and improve tax collections given the anticipated revenue shortfall. Still, it's common sense not to fight battles that are seemingly unwinnable. Rather, officials should tackle domestic direct tax disputes, which on last count stood at a staggering ₹9.32 lakh crore. To free up tribunals and end prolonged litigation, the government rolled out the Vivad se Vishwas scheme this year, but the move saw a mere ₹72,480 crore in collections as against expectations of ₹2 lakh crore. Needless to say, it's time to adopt a modern direct tax code to resolve systemic issues and ensure transparency.

## DOUBLE WHAMMY IN TELANGANA

Registration of non-agricultural properties ought to be a revenue-spinning department. But the migration from the Computer-Aided Administration of Registration (CARD) system in Telangana to the ambitious Dharani portal a few months ago has been fraught with problems, most of them self-goals by the government, reducing revenue to a trickle. CM K Chandrashekar Rao conceived Dharani as a fast, user-friendly and transparent portal, but it was seen as intrusive since furnishing Aadhaar details of sellers and buyers apart from their caste and community information was made mandatory. Soon, it hit a judicial brick wall as the Telangana High Court disallowed seeking Aadhaar data, citing the Supreme Court's ban on it except for reaching benefits of welfare schemes to individuals. Registrations on Dharani came to a halt on September 8, turning off the revenue tap. Three months later, it was reopened after the court said it was okay with registrations under the CARD system without seeking Aadhaar details. But the response to this was rather low-key as the government had earlier ordered that unauthorised layouts have to be regularised under the Layout Regularisation Scheme (LRS) before seeking registration, but the court stayed the LRS. During the three months when registration remained suspended, transactions of about ₹25,000 crore could not take place. On the first day of registrations on Monday last, only 2,536 transactions happened as against 4,000 on a normal day, fetching ₹71.73 crore for the exchequer.

For the government, it is a double whammy. It should have known that seeking Aadhaar data would not stand judicial scrutiny. As for the LRS, it is clearly a ploy to generate revenue and not to ensure planned development. Had the government really wanted planned development, it would not have allowed unauthorised layouts in the first place. While several thousands of land transactions were understandably stuck during the lockdown for a few months, many of them remain hanging in the post-lockdown mess. No wonder the ruling party's poor show in the Dubbaka seat and the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections is also being blamed on the Dharani botch-up.

Generally, stunting and wasting are correlated. Therefore, the reverse movements in these two variables are a bit of an anomaly

## DECODING INDIA'S STUNTING AND WASTING NUMBERS

BIBEK DEBROY

Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the PM

AMIT BANDRE

Amidst the Covid pandemic, two recently published reports did not receive the attention they normally do. The first is UNDP's Human Development Report (HDR), published annually at this time of the year. In something like the HDR, reportage invariably focuses on India's rank as determined by HDI (index based on life expectancy at birth, school indicators and purchasing power parity-based per capita income). Data is available with a lag for variables included in HDI computations as well as other human development or deprivation indicators. Therefore, for the most part, data in the HDR is for 2019, not just for India, but for other countries too. Hence, it doesn't capture the impact of Covid. Rankings are relative and are functions of how other countries perform. In rankings, India is now 131st out of 189 countries, having slipped a couple of ranks compared to a year ago. (This year, as an innovation, there is a planetary pressure adjusted HDI too and India performed relatively better on that.) India's HDI value is now 0.645 (highest is 1 and lowest is zero), the medium human development category. This has consistently improved since HDRs started in 1990. While progress should be faster, there is nothing in HDR data to suggest human development outcomes have worsened, including those that are health-related.

However, there are a few statements in the HDR that should be mentioned. "Disasters continued to trigger most new displacements in 2020. Cyclone Amphan hit Bangladesh and India, driving the largest single displacement event in the first half of the year, triggering 3.3 million pre-emptive evacuations." "The same happens in Asia, where indigenous children in Cambodia, India and Thailand show more malnutrition-related issues such as stunting and wasting." "Meanwhile, the heaviest monsoon in 25 years produced catastrophic floods and the loss of at least 1,600 lives across 13 Indian states; in Kerala more than 1,00,000 people had to be evacuated. There is a high prevalence of recent catastrophic events such as floods, cyclones and locust attacks in India and Pakistan. In 2018, India was the fifth most affected by extreme weather, with 2,100 deaths and $38 billion in losses in purchasing power terms." Stunting concerns height and wasting concerns weight. Without getting into technical definitions of these terms, stunting means height is significantly below the norm and wasting means weight is significantly lower than normal. The HDR also states, "In India, different responses in parent behaviour as well as some disinvestment in girls' health and education have led to higher malnutrition among girls than among boys as a consequence of shocks likely linked to climate change."

In principle, stunting and wasting can be used for anyone, irrespective of age. But obviously, since future development is adversely affected, it is a more serious issue for children. The HDR makes three statements: (a) Malnutrition, leading to stunting and wasting, is more concentrated in some population groups. (b) Some parts of India have suffered from floods, cyclones and locust attacks. (c) Exogenous shocks can adversely influence private investments in girls' health and education. It has a gender angle. When we are in a position to gauge the impact of Covid, an issue like (c) will indeed be important.

The point is, there is a lot we don't know about the numbers. For instance, infant mortality rates are declining, a desirable outcome. In all probability, their heights and weights will be significantly below standard norms

Let me now bring in the second report, the 5th National Family Health Survey (NFHS). This is for Phase I and includes 22 states and Union territories, not all. The period for the survey is 2019-20, pre-Covid. There are a host of indicators that show improvements, compared to the 4th NFHS in 2015-16. But I wish to focus on under-5 children who are stunted and wasted. Between 2015-16 and 2019-20, these percentages should decline, as they have in many states. But we then come to a state like Assam, where the percentage of under-5 children who are stunted declined from 36.4% to 35.3%, but the percentage of wasted children increased from 17.0% to 21.7%. Bihar and J&K have the same pattern. The stunting number improved, but the wasting one did not. There is a reverse trend for Gujarat, where the stunting number deteriorated, but the wasting number improved. Both deteriorated for Himachal, Telangana and Kerala. The wasting number remained the same for Maharashtra, but the stunting number worsened. That's also the pattern in West Bengal.

There should be concern about the health of under-5 children and efficiency of public health expenditure, typically a state government function. Improvements should have been more and one should be specifically worried about stunting and wasting. But since the numbers cited also apply to states that have not been through climate-related exogenous shocks, I don't think this offers an adequate explanation. Given the quoted variations across states, I don't think one can make any all-India generalisations either. Perhaps someone should probe district-level data, from which state-level data is aggregated. Generally, stunting and wasting are correlated. Therefore, the reverse movements in these two variables are a bit of an anomaly. Surveys are based on samples. Therefore, I also wonder if the samples of the 4th and 5th NFHS are comparable. Differences in cohorts of children might very well explain these apparent anomalies. For instance, infant mortality rates are declining, a desirable outcome. This means children who would otherwise have died are not dying now. In all probability, their heights and weights will be significantly below standard norms. Stated differently, neo-survivors pull down average heights and weights. This is a speculative assertion. But the point I am making is that there is a lot we don't know about the numbers.

*(Tweets @bibekdebroy)*

## THE ANYTHING, ANYWHERE MODEL OF GLOBALISATION

HINDOL SENGUPTA

Vice President & Head of Research at Invest India, GoI's national investment promotion agency

This essay was born out of two Twitter exchanges: the first with German geographer Simon Kuestenmacher and the second with Silicon Valley investor Balaji Srinivasan. Kuestenmacher tweeted out a map that showed the startlingly small geographical area responsible for bringing in half of the global GDP. Srinivasan wrote in his tweet, "The SF (San Francisco) Bay Area is one of the richest places in the world. We really don't need to commit to making rich places richer. We need to decentralise technology to the entire world. I'm more excited to invest in the Middle East and the Midwest, Nigeria and India, than in SFBA."

For most of humanity, the vast amount of the world's productive activity and riches have coagulated in major cities, from Rome to Baghdad, London to Tokyo, New York to Mumbai. This aggregation gave cities both their ephemeral sense of immortality and their mythology.

It also made them very crowded and, in more recent times, struggle to deal with issues such as little open spaces, limited parking and air pollution. The question to ask is not how to decongest cities, but what made them crowded in the first place?

Simply, aggregation has economic benefits. Proximity helps build efficiencies in the flow of information, helps build resilient networks and cheapens cost of transportation. There is, therefore, natural economic logic to the cheek-by-jowl-ness of a large city.

But no matter where one looks, from Silicon Valley heavyweight companies moving base to Texas to Indian tech entrepreneurs trying out models of working from villages, there are signs of the aggregated urban model disaggregating. There are many reasons for this: low taxes, cleaner environments, better quality of life and low expenses.

Such impulses to move location—never easy for big business—has also been propelled by the supply chain resilience impetus created by trade wars and the Covid-19 pandemic. It is supported by mass digitisation, rising internet speeds and cloud computing technology, which is creating what I call an 'anything, anywhere' world. This AA world, if you will, promises one of the greatest disruptions for business and urbanisation in history. It holds within it the promise for workers to work from anywhere, on anything, without the need to relocate. It must be stressed here that we are talking about relatively privileged workers here whose work is based on the use of tech platforms.

If you think about it, what does this amount to, really? It holds within it the promise of bridging the gap that our latest wave of globalisation has created—between the active participants and beneficiaries, and those left behind. It is a spread of companies, jobs and work, and in turn, of income towards places that might have suffered from the tyranny of distance in the aggregation model. The benefits of the earlier age of globalisation, in many ways, came to those who could relocate to the major hubs of capital, commerce and jobs. From now on, perhaps the entry barrier would only be as high as those who can access high speed internet.

The benefits of the earlier globalisation came to those who could relocate to the major hubs of capital, commerce and jobs. From now on, perhaps the entry barrier would only be as high as those who can access high speed internet. Technological interventions are showing what comes after the age of Great Cities. This works to India's advantage

That, after all, is what's left behind if there is nowhere specific that you have to go to access the fruits of the best markets. Instead, the markets are at your doorstep, or perhaps more accurately, at your desktop. Such a spread—whether you think of this in terms of Mahatma Gandhi's self-sufficient villages or Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan of rolling out numerous 'smart' cities—would assist in decongesting the accumulation of population and wealth in very concentrated dots of geography. This kind of tech-driven spread would not be the suburbanisation of yore. There would be no need to make the harried trip to the downtown office every day. The AA model opens the gateway for people—at least those whose work is connected to technology—to locate themselves in the geography of their convenience.

Remember the map that we started this essay with? The concentration of the world's wealth is, as we hear every day, one of the biggest challenges facing society. It is tearing our world apart. But not enough is discussed about how this concentration is not only among people (the infamous 1%) but also in geographical locations. The anything, anywhere model breaks this hegemony for it is fundamentally inclusive in terms of that vital element—geography.

This works to India's advantage. India is simultaneously working to develop its hinterlands, expand its city network, empower villages, and present itself as a suitable alternative in the global value chains. It also has one of the most efficient and low-cost internet networks in the world, which is fast expanding. The anytime, anywhere world helps both myriad Indian products tucked away far from major cities to find markets with ease and for the country to insert itself more effectively in global supply chains. An AA situation, if there was one.

*(hindol.opinion@gmail.com)*

## MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

### Work on own party first

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's comment about there being no democracy in India under PM Narendra Modi seems like one made by a political novice. Instead of refurbishing his dying party, his harping on about Modi is his own incapacity to see the writing on the wall. His immediate concern should be to provide a semblance of opposition to the ruling party.

**DS P Rao, Kakinada**

### Does GOP have democracy?

Rahul Gandhi needs to introspect about whether there has been any democracy in the Congress since 1999, when his mother, Sonia Gandhi, took over as party president. She essentially converted the Grand Old Party into a private company with shareholders only from her family.

**G Parthasarathy, Vellore**

### Be careful during New Year

It is heartening to read that there has been no case of the new Covid strain in Andhra Pradesh yet and that the government is taking precautions to maintain this. However, we must remember that the pandemic is not over yet. The onus is on us to adhere to the Covid protocols and keep a low profile during the New Year celebrations.

**C Ghanshyam, Visakhapatnam**

### Bedi's objections justified

Late BJP leader Arun Jaitley was accused of rampant corruption during his tenure as the president of the Delhi cricket association. The accusations were levelled against him primarily by former BJP MP and cricketer Kirti Azad. Bishen Singh Bedi is right to object the idea of installing Jaitley's statue in the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium.

**R Sivakumar, Chennai**

### Human life more important

It is regrettable to see the trade and business community and some of the public opposing the night curfew in the Christmas and New Year period. We are yet to completely overcome Covid and have to contend with the sudden emergence of a more potent variant. A night curfew during the festive season at such a time is vital. One hopes wiser council prevails and the government sticks to its stand.

**B Balasubramanyam, Mysuru**

### Working on gender equality

It is great that Karnataka has ranked sixth in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Though the gender equality average is still below par, it is pleasing to see the government take steps to lift it up.

**Raman R Patil, Bengaluru**

### Accused get a long rope

This is with reference to *Abhaya murder case verdict a closure, but not justice* (Dec 25). The inordinate delay of 28 years in the Abhaya case makes one wonder if anything can truly be done to speed up the disposal of cases. Even at the fag end of the case, there is still the possibility of a further appeal. It seems our legal system gives a long rope to the accused.

**Capt Raju Mathai, Kochi**

### At least justice was served

It is verily said that justice delayed is justice denied. The only consolation in the Abhaya case is that justice has been done, even if belatedly. The matter of concern in this case is that the accused were religious persons who were supposed to guide others to leading a moral and spiritual life.

**K R Jayaprakash Rao, Mysuru**

### She led a life of simplicity

The late Sugathakumari, a well-acclaimed poet and social activist, lived a life of utmost simplicity and modesty. In her life, she often expressed her wish to not be cremated with state honours upon death. The state bestowed that on her, contrary to her wishes. Though it was well-deserved, it is still an insult to the departed soul.

**Ravi Mannethu, Pullad**

### Lanka protests indefensible

The silent protests in Sri Lanka over the cremation of Muslim Covid victims is indefensible. The claim that burials may lead to further spread of the pandemic is scientific and so cremation is more comprehensive. The intervention of religious tsars will create misleading apprehension among the faithful.

**Thomas K M, Muvattupuzha**

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**TWEETS OF THE DAY**

**Rajnath Singh** @rajnathsingh
Except for PM Modi, no one in independent India has taken as many effective steps for the welfare of the farmers and poor of the country.

**Shivraj Singh Chouhan** @ChouhanShivraj
PM @narendramodi is the true benefactor of the farmers. Today, he transferred more than 18,000 crores of Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme to the account of farmers.

**Balasaheb Thorat** @bb_thorat
Farmers have been demanding that the farm laws be scrapped. But PM is busy showing the importance of schemes like PM Kisan Samman Yojana

# Share success stories to counter lies: Modi to farmers

During an interaction with seven farmers, PM seeks to allay fears that contract farming under new law would lead to land grabs, says they are being misled

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @ New Delhi

IN an interaction with seven farmers on Friday, the Prime Minister sought to address concerns that big private firms and corporate might grab their land under a new contract farming law enacted by the Centre.

While interacting with the farmers, the PM had one common query — "Is your land also taken away by the private buyers?". All the farmers answered in a resounding "no" and listed out the benefits of the new agri laws — exactly what the central government and the BJP have been harping on. "Some of the politicians are seeking to impose their ideologies on the farmers," the PM told the farmers while listening to their success stories. "Lies are being spread. When people like you talk, there will be confidence in others that no one will lose land, only crops are sold."

Modi sought to know from Manoj Patidar, a small farmer from MP, his experiences of the new farm laws. "Due to the new farm laws, we have got alternatives to sell our produce, which are tested in our presence and full details shared on the spot. We are given rates for the produce a day before testing, and the payments are made the same day," Patidar is reported to have told him.

Ram Gulab from UP told Modi that he brought together 300 small farmers to form Farmers' Producers Organisation, which has entered into an agreement with a company from Ahmedabad and fetched almost double prices for various produce. M Subramani from Tamil Nadu said he was able to earn an additional ₹1 lakh by growing tomatoes and roses and selling them to the private traders.

Ganesh Rajendra Bhonsale from Maharashtra said he had received a compensation of ₹54,000 after his crops were damaged by heavy rains under PM Fasal Bima Yojna, for which he had paid a premium of about ₹2,500. Farmers from Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana and Andhra Pradesh also shared their success stories with the PM. The farmers said they were utilising the money from the PM Kisan Nidhi scheme to buy seeds, pest control and fertilizers.

A farmer at the Ghazipur border in New Delhi watches Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech on TV inside a truck | EXPRESS

**GOVT TREATING FARMERS WITH CRUELTY: CONG**

The Congress attacked the PM saying he didn't have courage to talk face-to-face with agitating farmers and is busy giving "clarifications on television" while his ministers are hiding behind the smokescreen of letters. Accusing the Centre of treating the farmers with "cruelty and apathy", Congress media in-charge RS Surjewala said the BJP is branding them as "terrorists, parasite, tukde-tukde gang, misguided gang, khalistani and misguided lot". The party said it's shameful that the agriculture minister has gone to the extent of calling them political puppets. Instead of inventing excuses and indulging in event management, the Modi government should apologise to the farmers and withdraw these "black laws", he said. Surjewala said despite tall promises made to farmers, the truth was that not all farmer beneficiaries had been credited the amount under the PM-KISAN. "As per the 2015-16 agriculture census, 14.64 crore farmers undertake cultivation on 15.78 crore hectares. The Modi government launched the Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojna in December 2018 in which it was stated that ₹6,000 will be deposited into the accounts of all farmers in three installments," he said.

## Didi is denying money transfer to farmers, says PM; Bengal CM hits back

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE** @ New Delhi

ON a day the government unveiled a massive counter-offensive on the farm laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also sought to use the issue of central agri schemes to hit out at Mamata Banerjee government in West Bengal in line with the BJP's build-up of its poll campaign.

Accusing the Mamata government of denying over 70 lakh farmers in West Bengal money transfer under the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, the PM said in his speech, "This is central government's fund. Still, the state government, due to political reason, is not allowing over 70 lakh farmers to get the benefits."

> **Mamata Banerjee's ideology has destroyed the state... Why there was no protest for ensuring PM-KISAN money (in West Bengal)?**
> Narendra Modi, PM

Earlier, setting up the tone, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar lamented that the Bengal government hasn't yet submitted the list of beneficiaries for the scheme under which the Centre transfers ₹6,000 annually in three equal installments into the bank accounts of the farmers. "Bengal is the only state in the country which hasn't allowed the farmers to avail the benefits," said Tomar.

Responding to the attacks, Mamata charged Modi with misleading people with half-truths and distorted facts over non-implementation of the scheme in the state. She alleged that instead of proactively working to resolve the issues of the farmers, the PM chose to show his apparent concern for them through a televised address.

Maintaining that she had written two letters to Tomar and had even spoken to him two days ago, the Bengal CM said, "They are refusing to cooperate and are instead indulging in malicious propaganda for political gains."

Modi also targeted the Left parties, accusing them of instigating the farmers of Punjab. The PM said he was surprised that those who ruled Bengal for 30 years before the incumbent TMC government were not agitating for the farmers there.

"They have gone from West Bengal to Punjab. But they will not stand in solidarity with the farmers of West Bengal," he said.

## 2nd Delhi-Jaipur lane blocked

Farmers camping on the Delhi-Jaipur national highway at Jaisinghpur Khera to protest against the new farm laws on Friday blocked the second carriageway of the national highway after the Haryana Police prevented them from crossing the border. The farmers have been protesting on the highway at the Shahjahanpur border since December 12. Till now, only one lane of the Jaipur-Delhi highway had remained closed. On Friday, the vehicles were diverted towards Bawal. Protesting farmers had earlier announced that they would start proceeding towards Delhi on Friday, signalling their intent to further escalate the ongoing agitation.

## US lawmakers urge Pompeo to raise concern

NEW DELHI: Seven US lawmakers have written to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo raising concerns over the ongoing farmers' protest in India and urging him to reinforce US's commitment to the freedom of political speech to his "Indian counterpart".

"In view of the serious situation, we urge you to contact your Indian counterpart to reinforce the United States' commitment to the freedom of political speech abroad," the lawmakers wrote to Pompeo. The signatories include Indian-American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, Congress members Brendan F Boyle, Debbie Dingell, Brian Fitzpatrick, Mary Gay Scanlon, and David Trone.

The issue was of particular concern to Sikh American linked to Punjab, and it also impacted the Indian-Americans, the letter said. It added that many Indian-Americans were directly affected as they had family members and ancestral land in Punjab.

"... we are compelled to reach out to you after seeing press that farmers from Punjab, who were marching peacefully in Delhi, were brutally subjected to water cannon attacks, barbed ire barricades, and tear gas by Indian security personnel," said the letter. *ENS*

## Protesters target BJP functions, damage mobile towers in Punjab

**HARPREET BAJWA** @Chandigarh

AS the stalemate over the agri laws continues, farmers appear to be losing patience. A spate of incidents of violence was reported across several states on Friday.

The BJP faced the ire of farmers in Bathinda in Punjab on Friday. As the party was celebrating the birth anniversary of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a group of farmers entered the venue and allegedly broke chairs and the LED TV and even pelted stones. At least five party workers, including Bathinda BJP chief Vinod Gupta and state BJP legal cell co-convenor Ravinder Gupta, were injured in the melee. The BJP workers could be seen running away from the spot in a viral video. The police had to use mild force to disperse the group. However, some farmers at the venue claimed anti-social elements and not peasants were behind the incident.

In Jalandhar Cantonment, too, farmers gheraod the venue of a BJP function being held to commemorate Vajpayee. Later, they also tried to lay siege to the residence of BJP leader Manoranjan Kalia. The police lathi-charged them thus a few farmers received minor injuries. In Punjab, mobile towers of a leading private telecom operator have been targeted by the farmers over the last three-four days and power supply to most of these towers have been cut-off. Approximately 1,000 towers have been damaged.

Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Friday appealed to protesting farmers not to inconvenience the general public with such actions but continue to exercise the same restraint as they had been showing over the past several months of their agitation.

In Uttarakhand, farmer clashed with police in Udham Singh Nagar after the cops tried to stop them from marching to Delhi to join the ongoing protests. In a viral video, a tractor is seen pulling down a police barricade. Tajendra Singh Virk, president of Terai Kisan Sanghthan, said, "The police cannot snatch away our right to protest. We had planned a peaceful march to Delhi but police stopped us using force."

*Inputs from Vineet Upadhyay in Dehradun*

Cops intervene after a spat between BJP supporters and protesters in Bathinda | PTI

## 'Placebo receivers on priority list for vaccination'

**SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA** @ New Delhi

HYDERABAD-based vaccine-manufacturer Bharat Biotech, which is carrying out phase 3 clinical trials of its Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin, has promised priority vaccination to those trial volunteers — even those under 60 years — who end up getting the placebo and not the actual vaccine.

Covaxin, India's first homegrown vaccine in collaboration with the ICMR, is planned to be tested in around 26,000 volunteers across 25 sites as part of the late-stage trial, which can establish its efficacy.

As the trial plans to involve 26,000 volunteers, about 13,000 of whom have already been recruited, nearly half of them will receive a placebo as this is a double blind, placebo-controlled trial.

The development comes amid reports that at some of the trial sites, there are not enough volunteers showing interest in participation. In a document issued to the principal investigators of the trial, the company has said those who receive a placebo will be contacted and given the vaccine, thus getting priority access to the vaccine-even those below 60 years.

"Since there is also an equal chance of getting a placebo for every participant, 50% of the participant will get the placebo, and they may get SARS-CoV-2 infection or Covid-19 any time after vaccination," says the document.

"Currently, no vaccine has been approved in India. Whenever a vaccine gets approval first, healthcare workers, frontline workers will receive the vaccine," it adds.

"It will take at least 6 months for elderly and will take a minimum of 6-12 months for a person under the age of 60 to receive a vaccine, due to limited supply."

The document adds, "if you participate in this trial, this vaccine will most likely get licensed within a few months. and if you received a placebo, we will contact you and give you the vaccine, thus giving you priority access to the vaccine (even if you are below 60 years)."

> **If you have received a placebo, we will contact you and give you the vaccine, thus giving you priority access to the vaccine**
> Bharat Biotech, Covid vaccine-maker

**26,000 volunteers**
Covaxin, India's first homegrown vaccine in collaboration with the ICMR, is planned to be tested in around 26,000 volunteers to establish its efficacy

## Dry run for Covid-19 vaccine rollout in four states next week, says Centre

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**
@ New Delhi

IN another indication that a Covid-19 vaccination drive could soon begin in India, the Centre has planned a dry-run of the inoculation process in four states — Punjab, Gujarat, Assam and Andhra Pradesh — next week.

According to the plan, two districts in each of these states will check their preparedness in five types of medical settings — district hospitals, community and public healthcare centres, urban and rural areas, and private facilities on December 28 and 29.

Significantly, the exercise — a precursor to the actual programme — will focus on management of any possible adverse events following immunisation besides conducting mock drills, checking usage of Co-WIN vaccine registration app, storage and transport preparedness, and crowd management.

Also, adherence and management of infection control practices at the site will be checked to ensure that the drive does not lead to disease transmission.

Meanwhile a statement by the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry said the dry run is meant "to strengthen the capacity of our human resource for introduction and roll-out, detailed training modules have been developed for different categories of vaccine handlers and administrators including medical officers, vaccinators, alternate vaccinators, cold chain handlers, supervisors, data managers, ASHA coordinators and all others involved in the implementation process at different levels."

Overall, 2,360 participants were trained during national-level training of trainers which comprised state immunisation officers, cold chain officers, IEC officials and development partners among others.

## 40 flyers from UK since Nov 25 tested +ve

A man dressed as Santa Claus meets a Covid-19 patient on the occasion of Christmas at Noida's Yatharth Hospital on Friday | PTI

NEW DELHI: Over 40 people of around 40,000 travellers from the UK, arrived in India since November 25, have tested positive for the Covid-19 and their samples are being subjected to advanced tests to assess whether they carry the mutant SARS CoV-2, government officials told this newspaper.

The results for the spike gene RT-PCR tests are expected by Sunday at the earliest, officials at the Union Health Ministry said also said.

"Following our guidelines, the states followed up with a large number of people who have arrived in India from the UK and 40 plus people who were found symptomatic were found to be infected through RT-PCR tests," a senior government official said, adding that the infected individuals have been put in institutional quarantine. *ENS*

**ASSAM**

## NCPCR raises alarm on 6 orphanages run by MP, terror links suspected

**SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA** @ New Delhi

THE National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) on Friday raised alarm bells against the functioning of six shelter homes in Assam and Manipur saying nearly 300 of about 1,000 children mentioned in documents were not found during the inspections.

Among several other serious charges, the commission said in its report to the Centre and the state governments that at least one child care institution run by Markaz Darul Yatama is accepting money from IHH, an international NGO which is suspected to have links with the al-Qaeda.

> **Badruddin under scanner**
> The shelter homes — at Dhubri, Goalpara, Hojai and Nagaon in Assam and Thoubal in Manipur — are run by AIUDF MP Badruddin Ajmal

The shelter homes — at Dhubri, Goalpara, Hojai and Nagaon in Assam and Thoubal in Manipur — are run by All India United Democratic Fund (AIUDF) MP from Dhubri Badruddin Ajmal.

Ajmal could not be available for comments despite multiple attempts to reach him.

The 15-page report sent following inspections by NCPCR and state child rights commission authorities between December 14-18 has recommended a probe by the National Investigation Agency into the suspicious 'Aqiqah project' with which the children were said to be attached, but whose details could not be provided.

"Three of the shelter homes were found to be illegally run as they were not registered and in all six homes, children have been kept in deplorable conditions without seeking permission from district child welfare committees," NCPCR chairman Priyank Kanoongo told this newspaper.

He added that not only was there was evidence of serious financial irregularities, including illegal foreign funding, but children were also being given corporal punishment routinely.

"Also, we have got evidence that their details were being shared with some organisations in Turkey," Kanoongo said.

"The team, during the inspection of Markaz Darul Yatama, Dhubri, had been informed about funds being received by IHH, which is based in Turkey, for the implementation of AKIKA project in 2016," the report says.

**LOCAL TRAINS HIT**

Mumbai: The movement of trains on the Thane-Vashi Trans-Harbour suburban railway line was disrupted on Friday after a local's pantograph got entangled with the overhead wire at a Navi Mumbai station

**18K** GUJARAT — VHP TO VISIT FOR RAM TEMPLE FUNDS

| INDIA | Max | Min | | Max | Min |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahmedabad | 29 | 15 | Mumbai | 33 | 23 |
| Bhopal | 25 | 9 | Panaji | 33 | 23 |
| Jaipur | 23 | 9 | Patna | 22 | 9 |
| Amritsar | 17 | 3 | Lucknow | 22 | 7 |
| Chennai | 29 | 23 | Port Blair | 30 | 26 |
| Kolkata | 24 | 12 | Imphal | 20 | 7 |
| Srinagar | 6 | -1 | Chandigarh | 19 | 6 |

# Hic! Nashik leads wine capital race with GI tag

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @Mumbai

NASIK'S ambitions of claiming the wine capital of India status received an impetus after the Centre accorded it the coveted Geographical Indication tag. The city has been branded Nasik Valley Wine to give wine production a push.

Welcoming the move, the All India Wine Producers Association (AIWPA) president, Jagdish Holkar, said that the decision to brand the city as Nasik Valley Wine on the lines of Napa Valley in the US means a lot to the wineries.

The Centre, in its letter to AIWPA, had said that with the aim of promoting 'one-district, one-product' ideal, Nasik would be branded as Nasik Valley Wine under the PM's Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme.

This is a part of the Union government's push to promote each district into a global manufacturing hub and a leading exporter.

"The particular taste of any fruit or crop is attributable to the soil in the region. The soil and the geographical condition of Nasik are unique. That was the reason why we could produce a particular variety of grape that aided in wine production," said Holkar.

Jubilant after the fillip, he said that they would rebrand their wine and sell it aggressively in the overseas market. The major clients of Nasik wine as of now are the UK, the US, and Canada, where a huge number of expatriates offer a ready client base.

He urged the Centre to slash taxes and promote Nasik wines in other states to expand its share.

**WHAT IS GI TAG?**

Geographical Indication tag is given to products originating from a definite territory

**WHAT DOES IT COVER?**

It is used to identify agricultural, natural or goods manufactured in a definite territory

**WHAT ARE THE ATTRIBUTES?**

It should have a special quality or reputation, or other characteristics

**IN INDIA**

Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act,1999, protects GI tag products

**NOTABLE MENTIONS**

- Kanchipuram silk saree
- Nagpur orange
- Kolhapuri chappal
- Bikaneri bhujia
- Agra petha

**35** Wineries in Nasik | **8,000** Acres of vineyard

**80%** Grapes used for wine production

**1 crore** Litre produced annually in Nasik

**RED & WHITE** colour produced in Nasik Valley Wine

**JOINS:** Jalgaon banana, Mahabaleshwar strawberry & Sangali turmeric

DAMAGE LIMITATION

# Didi's personal touch to stem attrition in TMC

Unhappy leaders to get Mamata's ear to air their grievances; meetings begin in January

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kolkata

FACED with discontent among the party functionaries, Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee has decided to interact with her disgruntled soldiers directly ahead of the Assembly elections due early next year. Party sources said Mamata's decision came after seven of the party MLAs, including Mamata's once trusted lieutenant Suvendu Adhikari, and a sitting MP switched to the BJP on December 19. Many more TMC leaders are rumoured to join the saffron camp.

"In the next few days, the CM will speak with some unhappy party leaders who are from Kolkata. She will start visiting districts from January. It has been decided that she will exchange dialogues with the disgruntled district-level functionaries after conducting meetings with district officials and elected representatives," said a senior TMC leader.

"We will have to stop further migration from our party. If it continues, a message would go out that the TMC is facing an electoral disaster," he said.

BJP sources said Union Home Minister Amit Shah was likely to visit Bengal again on January 12 and that he might address a rally at Dumurjala stadium in Howrah. The TMC leadership anticipates another round of migration on the day of Shah's rally.

"A section of elected representatives in Howrah has already expressed its discontent. Rajib Banerjee, the minister for forest affairs from Howrah district, has criticized the party leadership on many occasions. Our party secretary general Partha Chatterjee has met Banerjee twice. Given the fact that Banerjee skipped the Cabinet meeting called a couple of days ago, there is a strong buzz that he would quit the party," said another TMC leader.

Mamata had not spoken to Suvendu Adhikari face-to-face. "In a meeting between Adhikari and party MP Saugata Roy, where CM's nephew Abhishek Banerjee, was also present, the CM had spoken with Adhikari over phone and asked him to sort out the issues. But it did not work. So, this time, the CM has decided to intervene directly," said the TMC leader.

# Gupkar Alliance leaders admit folly of lax campaigning in poll

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

THOUGH buoyed by the stellar results in the District Development Council (DDC) polls, the seven-party Peoples' Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) constituents think had the top leadership campaigned vigorously in the initial stages of the hustings, the results could have been better.

The Gupkar Alliance kept the campaigning for the first-ever DDC polls in J&K a "low profile" affair, with all top leaders, including Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti and CPM leader Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, staying away.

Only the Gupkar Alliance spokesman and Peoples Conference chairman Sajjad Lone campaigned in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, while the canvassing elsewhere was mostly left to the candidates or second rung leadership.

The Gupkar Alliance emerged as the single largest group with 110 out of 280 seats, while BJP emerged as single largest party with 75 seats.

"Had the top leaders campaigned, things could have been different. We could have won more seats," said a leader of one of the parties of PAGD.

> The government should lift all the curbs and allow the assembly of people. Once the curbs are lifted, you will see how big rallies are held
>
> Justice (Retd) Hasnanin Masoodi

According to him, Farooq Abdullah could not campaign because of Covid-19 threat, while others refrained fearing tough questions and angry mobs. However, the results would act as the stimulant the alliance needed. "The PAGD leaders may now go pro-active and play active politics on Article 370 restoration," he said.

PAGD convener and NC MP Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi said the dormant campaigning owed it to authorities' intervention. Asked whether PAGD leaders will now come out and play a pro-active role, he said, "Of course. The government should lift all the curbs and allow the assembly of people. Once the curbs are lifted, you will see how massive rallies are held."

JUMBO TREAT

An animal keeper feeding a six-month-old elephant calf rescued from Satgaon army camp at the Assam State Zoo-cum-Botanical Garden in Guwahati on Friday | PTI

# Sore Gehlot says prez snub unfair

RAJESH ASNANI @Jaipur

UPSET with President Ram Nath Kovind for not granting audience to four Congress chief ministers on the farmers' agitation issue, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that the refusals were due to the pressure exerted by the Central government.

"First, Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amrinder Singh sought audience, but received no response. Later, four chief ministers from Rajasthan, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, and Pondicherry collectively wrote to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, and received no response. I can imagine that the President must be under some kind of pressure, which is why he is simply refusing to meet us. In the past 40 years, no president has refused time to the chief ministers. This is the first time that a president has refused to give time," Gehlot said.

Addressing media during an event to mark two years of his government in office, Gehlot targeted Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra, alleging that he was acting entirely at the behest of the Central Government. Gehlot said that Centre's interference was a major threat to India's democracy.

When asked about Ajay Maken describing Sachin Pilot as an asset for the party, Gehlot said, "There is nothing wrong with Ajay Maken's remark. Every Congress worker is an asset for the party. The more senior a worker the greater the asset he is."

# UP man gets police protection after threats over religious conversion

NAMITA BAJPAI @Lucknow

AMID growing police cases in interfaith marriages under the anti-conversion law across Uttar Pradesh, the Aligarh police have stepped in to provide security to a man allegedly receiving threats to his life after his conversion to Hinduism.

Sources said Qasim, who along with his children, embraced Hinduism on December 20, renamed himself as Karamveer in Aligarh. Since his conversion, Karamveer claimed he had been receiving threats to his life and his family. Talking to the media, Karamveer termed his conversion as *ghar vapasi* (homecoming) as per Sanatan Dharma rituals, which took place at the local Arya Samaj temple on December 20. "After I converted, my family and I are being threatened that we will be killed," he said.

"There are many people from the Muslim community offering me money for converting back. As I have rejected their offers, they are now threatening me," Karamveer said, adding he has been in the hiding for the past one week. He alleged a BJP leader had sent goons to threaten him. Karamveer said he had married a Hindu girl through Vedic rituals. "But none of us changed our religion," he said, adding after conversion he was happy that he had returned to his original ancestry.

On his complaint at the Delhi Gate police station, the police gave security to Karamveer and his family.

**EXPRESS READ**

**Akhada Parishad to make list of fake saints**

Dehradun: Akhil Bharatiya Akhada Parishad has decided to prepare a list of fake saints and self-styled godmen and send it to Uttarakhand CM to prevent them from taking part in Mahakumbh.

**Bangladesh says there's no infiltration into India**

Guwahati: Bangladesh on Friday claimed there was no infiltration into India. The Border Guards Bangladesh DG said some Bangladeshis visit India for treatment with valid documents.

# In a first, BJP poaches MLAs from ally JDU

**BJP lists out SOP in fight to turn booths into citadels**

Kolkata: BJP's West Bengal chapter on Friday launched its Mera Booth Sabse Majboot, the party's mantra in 2019, to strengthen the party's booth-level management ahead of the 2021 Assembly elections. BJP state president Dilip Ghosh asked all booth presidents to consolidate electorate at the booth level in favour of the saffron camp.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Guwahati/Patna

BIHAR Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JDU suffered a setback on Friday as six of its seven MLAs in Arunachal Pradesh defected to ally BJP.

The six MLAs – Hayeng Mangfi, Jikke Tako, Dongru Siongju, Talem Taboh, Kanggong Taku and Dorjee Wangdi Kharma – were supposed to attend the JD(U)'s two-day National Working Committee meeting in Patna on Saturday.

Arunachal BJP chief Biyuram Wahge said the development shows people's trust in PM Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Pema Khandu's leadership.

Downplaying the event, Nitish Kumar said, "They (MLAs) went their own way."

BJP leader Arvind Kumar said, "They defected due to regional compulsions. The NDA is united in Bihar." The Rashtriya Janata Dal taunted Nitish calling the desertion the BJP's 'Christmas gift' to its ally.

"The BJP purchased six JD(U) MLAs in Arunachal. Nitish Kumar is silently watching everything. But he has to assert if his party will merge with the BJP," said RJD spokesperson Shakti Singh Yadav. Congress leader Prem Chandra Mishra said: "The BJP has come down to breaking up its own allies."

# Time to try out Bandhavgarh's balloon safari

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bhopal

IF you happen to be a wildlife lover with a dash of adventurous spirit, Bandhavgarh National Park and Tiger Reserve is where your calling lies. Now, you can have an aerial view of the free-spirited big cats roaming about in the reserve in Umaria district courtesy a Hot Air Balloon, which was launched on Friday.

The inaugural flight in the giant Hot Air Balloon had State's forest minister Kunwar Vijay Shah on board. "This is in line with the Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's vision of Buffer Mein Safar. This will go a long way in attracting more tourists to the State," Shah said after the maiden Hot Air Balloon flight over the reserve's buffer zone.

The Balloon Safari will be operated by SkyWaltz Balloon Safari, which is the country's first fully licensed and government approved commercial hot Air Balloon operator.

"We have ensured the safety of the wildlife lovers as well as the animals. We are allowing the operator to offer the service from a safe height. Landing and take off would be allowed only inside the buffer zone," the forest minister said.

"We have waited for ten years to start the service. It's only now that we have received the clearance," SkyWaltz Balloon Safari official Jai Thakur said.

Madhya Pradesh was declared the Tiger State in July 2019. As per the Tiger census report in July 2019, the tiger count in the state had risen to 526 in 2018 from 308 in 2014.

# Will continue studies, says youngest mayor

CONTINUED FROM PGAE 3

ARYA says her immediate priorities are to work for the welfare of the people and also to continue her studies.

"During my campaigning, many people, especially women, had asked me to pay equal attention to my studies. I will keep my word," she said with aplomb. She has missed three of her X'mas examinations and is now preparing to sit for the rest.

Among her plans for the corporation is effecting a behaviour change among residents so that they become more concerned about the city's cleanliness. "Some people still dump waste on the road. They need to be educated," she said.

Her other priorities include tackling children's emotional stress due to remote schooling.

"I was born in a Leftist family and had a natural flair for politics," she said, adding that her father was her first guru in politics.

## Adventure junkies can get a 250-foot-high in Rajgir

Come 2021, adventure junkies would have a new place to get their adrenaline soaring. Rajgir is likely to turn home to a glass-bridge skywalk in the next few months, making it the second destination after Sikkim's Pelling to have one. The 85-foot-long and six-foot-wide glass bridge has been built to promote adventure tourism at Rajgir, the home district of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who recently inspected it. The 250-foot-high bridge in the lap of the hills is likely to add heft to Rajgir's already widespread international fame.

RAJESH K THAKUR
Our correspondent in Bihar
rkthajipur@gmail.com

**PATNA DIARY**

## With power comes the responsibility to conserve it

With power comes the responsibility to conserve it. That is what the Bihar's energy department is trying to achieve through this catchy slogan: Conserve Energy for a Brighter Tomorrow. To drive home the point about its slogan, the department has roped in multimedia vans to traverse every nook and cranny of the State to enlighten people on energy conservation, all the while ensuring round-the-clock power availability to them. The vans were recently flagged off by the CMD of the State's energy department, Sanjeev Hans, as part of the National Energy Conservation Day. Hans says their aim is to educate the consumers on a 10-point agenda on conserving energy. "The consumers are being encouraged to replace incandescent light with compact fluorescent or LED bulbs," Hans says.

## Beggar-free Patna by March, says Minister

If all goes according to the plan, Patna may well become a beggar-free city by March 2021. The social welfare department is going all guns blazing under the Bhikhshavriti Niwaran Yojan to achieve this lofty ideal. As per estimates, the State has around 30,000 beggars, including the nearly 2,200 in Patna. Through targeted schemes, the officials aim to rehabilitate them. Recently, the minister of the department concerned, Ashok Kumar Chaudhary, gave financial assistance of ₹10,000 each to 18 beggars to help them start their own small scale ventures in Patna.

## Carmel High School marks virtual Christmas

At a time when the all-pervasive Covid-19 scare is showing no sign of any let up, Patna's prestigious Carmel High School organised a Virtual Christmas programme on December 22. Holy candles of enlightenment were lit with prayers marking the occasion. Captivating carol and Christmas Tree Décor competitions were organised in strict adherence to social distancing norms. A skit — The Shooting Star — depicting the birth of Jesus was presented by students while teachers presented the song Mary's Boy Child. Principal Sister M Serena A C and vice-principal sister M Promodini A C shared their messages of love and peace.

4,000
international truck drivers spent their Christmas Day stranded at UK border

**GLOBAL WEATHER**
LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 2 | -9 | SNY | Los Angeles | 23 | 9 | SNY |
| Colombo | 30 | 24 | TDS | Melbourne | 24 | 13 | LC |
| Dhaka | 27 | 20 | LC | Moscow | 15 | 9 | LR |
| Dubai | 37 | 25 | SNY | New York | 1 | -2 | HR |
| Houston | 19 | 9 | LC | Singapore | 32 | 26 | TDS |
| Istanbul | 12 | 6 | LC | Toronto | 3 | -2 | LC |
| London | 12 | 6 | LR | Washington | 5 | -1 | LR |

# Pearl's killers to walk free today, US voices concern

Journo's family welcomes Pakistan decision to challenge the verdict; will continue to monitor case, support journalist's family, says US

**ISLAMABAD**

BRITISH-BORN al-Qaeda leader Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and his three aides, whose release in the abduction and murder case of US journalist Daniel Pearl was ordered by a court here, would walk out of the prison on Saturday, police and lawyer said on Friday.

In a surprise move, a two-judge bench of the Sindh High Court on Thursday directed security agencies not to keep Sheikh and other accused under "any sort of detention" and declared all notifications of the Sindh government related to their detention "null and void".

According to the Jail Superintendent, the four men could not be released from Karachi's Central Jail on Thursday as the prison authorities received orders from the Sindh High Court for their release very late.

The legal counsel for the four men said that they would now be released on Saturday as Friday is a public holiday. Meanwhile, the United States on Friday expressed "deep concern" over Sindh High Court's order to release Sheikh and his aides and said it will continue to monitor any developments in the case.

"We are deeply concerned by the reports of the December 24 ruling of Sindh High Court to release multiple terrorists responsible for the murder of Daniel Pearl. We have been assured that the accused have not been released at this time," the US State Department said.

It said that the US will continue to monitor any developments in the case and will continue to support the Pearl family "through this extremely difficult process" while honouring the legacy of Pearl as a "courageous journalist". The US has been mounting pressure on Pakistan, demanding justice for Pearl.

Pearl, the 38-year-old South Asia bureau chief for *The Wall Street Journal*, was abducted and beheaded while he was in Pakistan investigating a story in 2002 on the links between the country's powerful spy agency ISI and al-Qaeda.

A three-judge apex court bench headed by Justice Mushir Alam is hearing the appeal by the Sindh government and the family of the slain journalist against the acquittal of Sheikh.

Pearl's murder took place three years after Sheikh, along with Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar and Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, was released by India in 1999 and given safe passage to Afghanistan in exchange for the nearly 150 passengers of hijacked Indian Airlines Flight 814.

## Tradition blamed as Japan delays goal on equality

**TOKYO**

JAPAN on Friday adopted a plan that delays women's advancement goals by up to a decade after failing to reach even half of the 30% target by 2020.

Under the new five-year gender equality plan, approved by Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's Cabinet, the government has postponed the goal for women to account for at least 30% of leadership positions until as early as possible during the 2020s. The plan called for a society with no gender bias by 2030s. But it said that Japan is still largely bound by traditional gender roles, making it difficult for women to pursue careers in business and politics while fulfilling expected responsibilities in homemaking and childrearing

**EXPRESS READ**

### Israeli jets triggers scare in Lebanon

Beirut: Israeli jets flew very low over parts of Lebanon early Friday, terrifying residents on Christmas Eve, some of whom reported seeing missiles in the skies over Beirut. Minutes later, Syria's official news agency reported explosions in the central Syrian town of Masyaf. Other Syrian media said Syrian air defences responded to an Israeli attack near the town. There was no immediate word on what the target was.

### PIO charged in Canada over scam

Toronto: A 25-year-old Indian-origin man in Canada has been arrested for his alleged involvement in a series of transnational telephone scams, wherein he was recruited by overseas scammers to process and launder locally-received money, police said. Abhinav Bector, who lives in Brampton has been charged with fraud of over $5,000, possession of the proceeds of crime and money laundering.

## PROCESS TO RATIFY POST-BREXIT DEAL BEGINS

**BRUSSELS**

THE fast-track ratification of the post-Brexit trade deal between the UK and the European Union got underway on Christmas Day as ambassadors from the bloc's 27 nations started assessing the accord that takes effect in a week.

At Friday's exceptional meeting, the ambassadors were briefed about the details of the draft treaty, which is believed to be around 1,250 pages long, by the EU's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier.

They are set to reconvene again on Monday and have informed lawmakers at the European Parliament that they intend to take a decision on the preliminary application of the deal within days.

While voicing their sadness at the rupture with Britain, EU leaders are relieved that the tortuous aftermath of the Brexit vote had come to a conclusion in Thursday's agreement about future trade ties.

All member states are expected to back the agreement as is the European Parliament, which can only give its consent retrospectively as it can't reconvene until 2021. British lawmakers have to give their approval, too, and are being summoned next week to vote on the accord.

In a Christmas message, Johnson sought to sell the deal to a weary public after years of Brexit-related wrangling since the UK voted narrowly to leave the EU in 2016. Although the UK formally left the bloc on January 31, it remains in a transition period tied to EU rules until the end of this year.v "I have a small present for anyone who may be looking for something to read in that sleepy post-Christmas lunch moment, and here it is, tidings, glad tidings of great joy, because this is a deal," Johnson said in his video message, brandishing a sheaf of papers.

Though tariffs and quotas have been avoided, there will be more red tape because as the UK is leaving the EU's single market and customs union. Firms will have to file forms and customs declarations for the first time in years. *AP*

European Union chief negotiator Michel Barnier (C) attends a special meeting of European envoys on Brexit in Brussels | AFP

**STUDYING THE PACT'S FINE PRINT**

The text of the agreement — all the 1,250 pages — are being examined by the envoys of the EU members states to make sure there are no hidden details that could later cause a problem

The envoys are expected to meet again on Monday. A vote in the European Union Parliament is not expected before December 31

In the United Kingdom, Parliament is set to vote on the deal on December 30

## Curfews, quarantines mar Christmas cheer

**VATICAN CITY**

CURFEWS, quarantines and even border closings complicated Christmas celebrations Friday for countless people around the globe, but ingenuity, determination and imagination helped keep the day special for many.

Bells rang out around Bethlehem on Friday as the traditional birthplace of Jesus celebrated Christmas Day. But the closure of Israel's international airport to foreign tourists, along with Palestinian restrictions banning intercity travel in the areas they administer in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, kept visitors away.

Churches in South Korea have ignited clusters of coronavirus infections in densely populated Seoul, along with hospitals, nursing homes, restaurants and prisons. The 1,241 new daily cases reported by the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency on Friday was a record for the country.

And in Catholic-majority Philippines, services were rocked when a 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck the country, capping off a troubled yuletide already muted by bans on parties and carol singing.

In war-ravaged northeast Syria, hundreds of residents of a predominantly Christian neighbourhood in the town of Qamishli ditched face masks and donned Santa hats, throwing caution to the wind to celebrate a Christmas tree lighting.

In Paris, members of Notre Dame Cathedral's choir, wearing hard hats and protective suits — not against Covid-19 but for construction conditions in the landmark ravaged by fire in 2019.

In Beijing, official churches abruptly cancelled Mass on Christmas Day in a last-minute move, after China's capital was put on high alert following the confirmation of two confirmed Covid-19 cases last week, and two new asymptomatic cases were reported on Friday. *AFP*

Christians wearing face masks, attend a Christmas mass at St John's Cathedral, in Peshawar, Pakistan on Friday | AFP

Pope Francis celebrates Mass on Christmas eve in Vatican

## Fraternity the watchword at this moment, says Pope

**VATICAN CITY**

POPE Francis said in his Christmas message on Friday that fraternity was a watchword for these unusually troubled times exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic.

"At this moment in history, marked by the ecological crisis and grave economic and social imbalances only worsened by the coronavirus pandemic, it is all the more important for us to acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters," he said in his "Urbi et Orbi" message.

He said this call for solidarity was especially aimed at "people who are the most fragile, the sick and all who at this period find themselves without work or in grave difficulty due to the economic consequences of the pandemic and to women who have been subjected to domestic violence during these months of confinement."

Francis made a plea for authorities to make Covid vaccines available to all, insisting that the first in line should be the most vulnerable and needy. "Vaccines for everybody, especially for the most vulnerable and needy," who should be first in line, Francis said. *AP*

**SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

E-Tender Notice No. 16UBL2020-21
Dated: 22-12-2020

The undersigned, on behalf of The President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following work:

| Name of Work | Approx. Value |
|---|---|
| Hubballi Division - Vijayapura: Improvement to kitchen katta, doors windows, backside steel doors and drainage chambers in Railway Quarters. | Rs. 18,13,124/- |

Last date for submission of bids: Upto 11.00 Hrs. of 18-01-2021

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Divisional Railway Manager / Works Hubballi

PUB/222/AAS/PRB/SWR/2020-21

QuoteExpress

IF YOU'RE GOING THROUGH HELL, KEEP GOING

WINSTON CHURCHILL

**DHFL** Changing Rules Changing Lives

**DEWAN HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED**

National Office: HDIL Towers, B-wing, 6th Floor, Anant Kanekar Marg, Station Road, Bandra (East), Mumbai - 400051.
Branch Office: Dhiraj Baug, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp. Monalisa Building, Agra Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West) 400602.

**DEMAND NOTICE**

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitization And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL) UNDER Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers foncerred under section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) the " said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is herereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to DHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/ or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to DHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

| Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor (s) / Loan Code | Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA date | PROPERTY ADDRESS |
|---|---|---|
| (LC No. 00003448 of Thirunelveli Branch) Arun M (Borrower) Murugan Jesse Owens M (Co Borrower 1) | 27-11-2020 ₹ 662791 /- (₹ Six lakh Sixty Two Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety One ) NPA ( 01-12-2019 ) | Door No : 30, S No : 26b/8b East Street , Mavadipannai Village Thenthirupperai Tuticorin District Tirunelveli Tamil Nadu :- 628623 |

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to DHFL as aforesaid, DHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of DHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date : 26.12.2020
Place : Bengalore

Sd/- (Authorised officer)
DEWAN HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED

citibank
Citibank N. A.,

**Possession Notice**

Whereas, the undersigned Sudarsan S. being the Authorised Officer of M/s. Citibank N.A., having office at 9th Floor, No. 148, Dr. Radha Krishnan Salai, Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004 under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 hereinafter called the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rules 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notices calling upon the borrowers, whose names have been indicated in Column (B) below on dates specified in Column (C) to repay the outstanding amount indicated in Column (D) below with interest thereon with 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical possession of the properties mortgaged with the Bank described in Column (E) below on the respective dates mentioned in Column (F) in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Rules made there under.
The borrowers in particulars and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties mentioned in Column (E) below and any such dealings will be subject to the charge of M/s. Citibank N.A. having office at 9th Floor, No. 148, Dr. Radha Krishnan Salai, Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004 for an amount mentioned in Column (D) alongwith interest and penal interest.

| Name & Address of Borrower | Date of Notice | Outstanding Amount | Deatils of Property Possession | Date of Possession |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) | (F) |
| **1. Mr. Ashish Kumar** At Villa 41, SkylarkArcadia Layout Adj, to Sri Sakti Layout, Sadaramangala, Kadugodi Post, Bangalore - 560 067. | **28.07.2020** | Rs. 52,40,325.47 | **Schedule A:** All that piece and parcel of immovable property being the residentially converted land with marginal land totally measuring 11 acres 29 guntas in extent comprised in Survey Nos. 22/2, 23/1 and 24/2, situated in Sadaramangala Village, K. R. Puram Holbi, Bangalore East Taluk, bounded on the North by : Private Property, South by : 30 feet Road leading to Main Road and portion of Survey No. 24/2 and Private Properties, East by : Private Properties and Portion of Survey No. 24/2 and West by : Private Property and Portion of Survey No. 24/2, together with all right of ingress and egress, water courses, appurtenants, kharab land, art road, right of way etc.,<br>A group housing project under the name and style of Skylark Arcadia consisting of viable separated sites/ plots of various dimension and sizes bearing Nos. 1 to 94 with all internal roads, parks, open space, water bodies common amenities and other allied internal and external services, including water supply system, sewage disposal system in the Schedule A Property.<br>**Schedule B:** All that piece and parcel of immovale property being a vacant plot in the said Residential layout skylark Arcadia being developed on the Schedule A property, which plot is now known as and bearing Site No. 41, Sadaramangala Village, K. R. Puram hobli, assessed by the Bangalore Development Authority, Bangalore, totally measuring 377.76 sqm (4066 sqft.) bounded on the North by : Park (measuring on that side 21.55 mtrs.) South by : Plot bearing No. 40 (measauring on that side 21.55 mtrs) East by : Road (measuring on that side 21.15 mtrs) West by : Private Property ((measauring on that side 22.91 mtrs). | **30.11.2020** |
| **2.Mr. Sanyaja S Hasthak**, FNo. G707, 7th Floor, Alpine Regency Apt. Sapphire Blk, No. 35, 4th Cross, 10 D MN Jayanagar 1 Blk, Bangalore - 560 011. | **28.07.2020** | **Rs. 8,55,874.28** | **Schedule A :**All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing New No. 62, 4th Main Road, 1 Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore - 560 011 in CTS No. 345/3, measuring 9258.98 sq.ft. presently coming under the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike and bounded on the East by : Private Property, West by : Property of Smt. Geetha Rani, S. R. Ramachandra & S. R. Vijay Kumar, North by : Private Property, South by : Road and Private Property.<br>**Schedule B :** All that piece and parcel of the Flat bearing Old No. 7F-707, now bearing New Municipal No. 35/79 and having PID No. 62-124-35/79 situated in 7th Floor of Alpine Regency situated at 1 Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore, which is being assessed by Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike having a super built up area of 1336 sq.ft. along with 493 sq.ft. undivided right, title and interest in the Schedule A property which is inclusive of 2 car parking area one covered and one open car parking numbered as 707 location in ground floor. | **30.11.2020** |
| **3.Mr. Baskaran Rajendran,** Apt No. G-0540, TWR-G, Divyasree, Republic of Whitefield, Kundalahalli KR Puram, Bangalore - 560 066. | **28.07.2020** | **Rs. 61,60,664.00** | **SCHEDULE - A** : All that piece and parcel of immovable properties comprised in Survey No.s 49/1 (9.76 guntas) 49/2 (2.22 guntas), 57 (4 acres 26.81 guntas),78P (2 acres 5.25 guntas) and 95 (4 acres 27.46 guntas) in all measuring 11 acres 31.5 guntas, all converted for non-agricultural residential purpose, situated at Kundalahalli Village, K. R. Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk and forming part of the Larger Property and bounded in common as follows : East : Private Property, West :Remaining lands in the larger property and Private Property, North : Remaining lands in the larger property and South : Private Property.<br>**Schedule B :** An undivided share, right, title in the Schedule A property measuring 519.23 sq.ft.<br>**Schedule C :** Flat No. G0540, 3 BHK premium flat with 1724 sq.ft. super built up are in Tower G in Block R01 with one convered car park. | **30.11.2020** |
| **4. Mr. Dataram Mishra**, A2 4052 5th Floor, Sobha Dahlia Apts, 4th Block, ORR Bellandur, Marathahalli, Bangalore - 560 037 | **05.08.2020** | **Rs. 49,71,519.37** | **SCHEDULE - A** : All that piece and parcel of composite residentially converted land bearing Sy. No. 97, Bellandur Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, totally measuring about 15,168.910 square meters (1,63,278.04 sq.ft) from and out of 1,74,240 sq.ft. of land (the properties are presently bearing BBMP Khata Nos.1077/ 1088/1167/97 & 1096/1107/1186/97) and bounded as follows : East : Sy. No. 95/1 belonging to Chinnappa & 95/2 belonging to Vendor, West : Sy. No. 98/28 belonging to Vendor, North : Sy. No. 101/1 & 101/2, South : By Village Road & thereafter Sy. No. 97/7 belonging to Neelamma & Venkatamma. **Schedule B :** An undivided 0.40% share, right, title and interest in the Schedule A property (648.32 sq.ft.) **Schedule C :** A three bedroom Apartment bearing No. A2-4052 in the Fifth Floor in the Apartment building known as "Sobha Dahlia" to be constructed in the Schedule A Property with a built up area of 1473.60 sq.ft. and 248.97 sq.ft. of proportionate share in common areas with one car parking space in the basement. | **30.11.2020** |
| **5.Mr. Sanyaja S Hasthak**, FNo. G707, 7th Floor, Alpine Regency Apt. Sapphire Blk, No. 35, 4th Cross, 10 D MN Jayanagar 1 Blk, Bangalore - 560 011. | **28.07.2020** | **Rs. 57,14,186.88** | **Schedule A :**All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing New No. 62, 4th Main Road, 1 Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore - 560 011 in CTS No. 345/3, measuring 9258.98 sq.ft. presently coming under the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike and bounded on the East by : Private Property, West by : Property of Smt. Geetha Rani, S. R. Ramachandra & S. R. Vijay Kumar, North by : Private Property, South by : Road and Private Property.<br>**Schedule B :** All that piece and parcel of the Flat bearing Old No. 7F-707, now bearing New Municipal No. 35/79 and having PID No. 62-124-35/79 situated in 7th Floor of Alpine Regency situated at 1 Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore, which is being assessed by Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike having a super built up area of 1336 sq.ft. along with 493 sq.ft. undivided right, title and interest in the Schedule A property which is inclusive of 2 car parking area one covered and one open car parking numbered as 707 location in ground floor. | **30.11.2020** |
| **6.M/s. Sesha saila Cements Pvt Ltd.,** No. 82-31/2, Thubarahalli Village, Ram gondana halli Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore - 560 066. | **28.07.2020** | **Rs. 76,91,107/-** | **Schedule I :** All that piece and parcel of immovable property now known as and bearing Khata No. 82-31/2, situated in Thubarahalli Village, Assessed under the Ramagondanahalli Village Panchayat, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, together with all pathways, easement rights, open space, etc., bounded on the North by : Property bearing Khata No. 81-31/2, measuring on that side 68 ft. South by Property bearing Khata No. 83-31/2, measuring on that side 68 ft, East by : Property of Byrappa, measuring on that side 75 ft 6 inches and West by : Road, measuring on that side 75 ft 6 inches. The total site area of the Schedule Property is 5135 sq.ft. The plinth area of the building is about 300 sq.ft. | **30.11.2020** |
| **7.Mr. Shiva Kumar H.,** Site No. 37.New No. 16, Amara jyothi Nagar, 1st Cross, SVG Nagar, Bangalore - 560072 | **28.07.2020** | **Rs. 2,74,721/-** | Property House bearing Municipal number 14 (formed in Survey number 50), 1st A Cross Road, Shanthaveri Gopalgowdanagara, Ward No. 37, Govindrajanagar Ward, BBMP Malagalu Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bengaluru North bounded on East by : Road, West by : Private Property, North by : Property bearing number 15 belongs to Shivaramaiah, South by : Private Property. measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 30 feet. | **30.11.2020** |
| **8.Mr. Uttam Kumar Gogoi** Flat No. RF 802, 8th Floor RF Block, Purva Riviera Apartment, Old Airport Road, Marathalli, Bangalore - 560037 | **28.07.2020** | **Rs. 64,80,049.61** | **Schedule A :** All that piece and parcel of residentially converted property being lands bearing Survey No. 29, in full and parts of Survey Nos. 23,24,27,28,31 & 32, Munnekolala Village Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, measuring 11.80 Acres 32 Guntas and all other appurtenances and bounded as follows: East by : Survey No. 32, 31 and 27 belonging to Spice Garden, West by : Land belonging to Usha Martin Power Company Ltd., North by : Tank in Survey No. 25 and K. G. Chinnappanahlli, South by : Bangalore - Whitefield Main Road, **Schedule B** : An undivided 0.119% share, (Zero point One One Nine percent) share equivalent to 613.32 sq.ft. in the land comprised in the Schedule A Property. **Schedule C** : A three bedroom flat bearing No. 802, on the 8th Floor, in the RF Block of the multi storeyed building known as Purva Riviera constructed in the Schedule A property with a super built up area of 1583 sq.ft. together with one covered car parking space. | **30.11.2020** |

Date : 23.12.2020
Place : Bangalore

Yours Faithfully,
AUTHORISED OFFICER
CITIBANK N.A.

**Market Watch**

| GOLD | | | SILVER | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ₹1 ▲ | 24 carat (1 gm) | ₹5,158 | ₹200 ▼ | Per kg | ₹71,200 |
| ₹1 ▲ | 22 carat (1 gm) | ₹4,721 | ₹0.20 ▼ | Per gm | ₹71.2 |

# Govt's disinvestment plans remain strong despite Covid-19 headwinds

Expressions of interest for ITDC, BEML, Concor and Neelachal Ispat to come early next year

ANURADHA SHUKLA
@ New Delhi

DISINVESTMENT intentions — both strategic and non-strategic — seem unfazed by the Covid-19 pandemic as the government is gearing up to invite expressions of interest (EoIs) for ITDC, BEML, Concor and Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd (NINL) in the next few days. While the coronavirus pandemic has put hurdles on the government's ambitious ₹2.1 lakh crore divestment plan for this fiscal, officials say such activities would remain at high levels starting early next year.

According to the sources in the finance ministry, there is a meeting on December 30 to decide on the final terms and conditions of EOI of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)'s sale of Ashoka Hotel, which will be followed by another meeting for BEML.

"The new year is going to be very hectic.There will be a series of disinvestments starting with ITDC and BEML and Concor. Then we have a mega IPO of LIC. We will try to make up for what we lost during the lockdown period," a senior official from the finance ministry told this publication.

**₹2.1 lakh cr**
Disinvestment target for FY21

**Below 51% stake policy**

Any firm in which the government will pare its stake to below 51 per cent will cease to be a 'government company' under the Companies Act.

During the ongoing fiscal year, EoIs of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Air India were laid out.

However, the last date for bid submission has been revised several times, mainly on account of lockdown, delaying the whole process. The strategic sale of Air India and BPCL is crucial for the government to achieve its target. Later, as the economy began showing some signs of recovery, the government once again kickstarted the process, inviting EoIs for Pawan Hans and Shipping Corporation of India.

So far, the Centre has raised ₹26,364.53 crore as it evaluates plans to reduce its stake in state-owned entities to 51 per cent. The total amount includes ₹13,696.59 from dividend and ₹10,992 crore from Bond ETF.

"Even during a pandemic, our efforts to disinvest some of the big companies are going on fine. The EoIs have come in and now we are on the next stage to complete these transactions. I expect DIPAM to be able to prove that they are even more actively engaging in those disinvestments for which the cabinet has already given approval," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said during her recent address to a business chamber, setting the agenda.

The Cabinet has approved strategic sale in over 25 public sector companies including, Concor India, Pawan Hans, Scooters India, Bharat Earth Movers Ltd (BEML), Central Electricity Corporation, Cement Corporation and some steel plants of SAIL, along with the transfer of management control. As announced earlier, the finance ministry is planning to sell 20-25 per cent stake in IRFC through an IPO, which is set to hit the market in next few days and 27 per cent stake in state-owned telecom infrastructure provider RailTel Corporation via IPO.

The government is expecting to raise about ₹6,000 crore from these two IPOs.

## ASIANOMICS

### SINGAPORE

**FACTORY OUTPUT REBOUNDS IN NOVEMBER**

Singapore factory output bounced back with a bigger-than-expected rise in November aided by rising production of biomedical and semiconductors. Factory output expanded 17.9% over last year, while on monthly basis output grew 7.2%, returning to the growth trajectory that was seen during June to September. The biomedical manufacturing cluster's output jumped 41%, while the pharmaceuticals segment shot up by 51% on the back of higher production of APIs and biological products. The key electronics sector surged 34.9%, while the semiconductor segment expanded by 41% riding high on the demand from 5G markets and a low production base. In all, the electronics cluster's output grew by 9.3% during January to November.

### TOKYO

**DECEMBER CORE CPI FALLS AT FASTEST PACE IN 10 YEARS**

Tokyo consumer prices fell the fastest in over a decade, while Japan's jobs market and retail sales remained subdued. The core CPI for Japan's capital, including oil products but excluding fresh food, fell 0.9% in December – the steepest drop since September 2010, data showed on Friday. Japan's unemployment rate fell to 2.9% as against October's 3.1%. The world's third-biggest economy recovered in the three months to September from its worst postwar contraction, but a third wave of the coronavirus infections threatens the economic revival. Retail sales grew 0.7% in November over last year, the second straight gain but slower than October's 6.4% jump.

### CHINA

**TARIFF EXEMPTIONS FOR SELECT US IMPORTS LIKELY**

China will extend tariff exemptions for imports of six US products including white oil and food-grade petroleum wax for one year. It may be recalled that China had announced exemptions on the six chemical and oil products from the US in December 2019, shortly after the two countries announced phase-1 of the trade deal. Earlier this week, the country announced that it will lower import tariffs on products in high domestic demand including medical equipment, raw materials for baby powder among others. For the year 2021, China will implement temporary import tariffs, which are lower than the most-favoured nation tariffs on 883 products, up from 859 taxed at temporary rates in the current year.

# Builders see 2021 as a year of demand revival

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

AFTER a troublesome 2020, the country's real estate sector sees 2021 as a year of recovery. The sector feels that the recent steps taken by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the government in terms of reducing repo rate and slashing stamp duty will mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and play an important role in attracting buyers.

Amid lower interest rates and varied offers by developers, home sales at top seven cities touched nearly 50,900 units in Q4 2020, rebounding to nearly 86 per cent of the corresponding period in 2019, said Anarock Property Consultants in a recent report. For the full 2020, housing sales fell 47 per cent year-on-year to 1.38 lakh units across the seven cities.

"As far as the residential market is concerned, we are already seeing demand gradually returning, especially in the fourth quarter of 2020. We hope to see the momentum continue in the next year as well," said Anurag Mathur, CEO, Savills India. According to Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO, India, South East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE, a gradual improvement in sales across all segments is expected, although mid-income (₹45 lakh- ₹1 crore) and budget (less then ₹45 lakh) categories are expected to be the key focus areas among homebuyers and "are expected

to perform relatively better."

Luxury realty developers also expect to see strong demand next year. "While in the super luxury segment, in Q2 alone, we achieved sales close to ₹350 crore; from June till this date a total of 20 units of super-luxury housing project 'The Camellias' has been sold worth close to ₹500 crore. And these are between ₹5 – 50 Crore. Going forward, we are optimistic of seeing a strong demand for homes in the luxury segment,"said Karan Kumar, chief marketing officer DLF.

TRADE BOOST

# UK-BASED INDIAN FIRMS TO BENEFIT FROM BREXIT

JAYANTA ROY CHOWDHURY
@ New Delhi

INDIAN companies doing business out of the United Kingdom into the European Union can rest easy for the time being as the Brexit deal will allow most of them to continue flourishing as it allows them to sell to EU markets not only at zero customs duty but also without any quotas being imposed.

India has some 850 companies, with a combined revenue of GB Pounds 41.2 billion($56.1 billion), in the UK. These firms, spread over steel, automobiles, pharma and engineering were on tenterhooks over the final shape of Brexit.

The zero tariff deal is especially significant for Tata Motors as otherwise Jaguar Land Rover products sold in Europe would have faced a 10 per cent duty from January. Among Indian firms who are setting up large projects in the UK, Mahindra-owned Pininfarina, the iconic Italian design firm, is partnering British Volt to build the UK's first large-scale battery gigaplant. The deal will allow such units to sell to EU not only without tariffs also without any quotas. "This will help the large Indian investments in pharma, steel and engineering in the UK as there will be no limits to the volumes they can sell into EU," said Prof. Biswajit Dhar, a former member of the Board of Trade.

**We mostly use the London money market to raise resources and that would remain strong as the continent does not have any comparable competing financial hub**

Prof Biswajit Dhar

While the outlook for the services sector is still unclear, as the fineprint is still being studied, Indian software giants who have UK registered arms do not see any immediate disruptions as the Brexit deal provides UK firms with legal guarantees that they will not face any disruptions to trade while selling their services in the EU.

Shivendra Singh, vice-president and head – global trade development at Nasscom said, "We are yet to study the fine-print, but as far as sending professionals onsite to locations Europe where our firms have projects, most of our companies do so from India and rules for them will remain the same."

Agreed technology and start-ups consultant and former Nasscom vice-president Prasanto Kumar Roy. "I do not see a major challenge... This could also actually open up more opportunities and deals with the UK itself for Indian IT firms."

## EXPRESS READ

**3.97 crore ITRs filed for FY20 till Dec 24**

New Delhi: As many as 3.97 crore taxpayers have already filed their returns till December 24, the Income Tax Department said on Friday. Due to the pandemic, the last date to file income tax return (ITR) for FY2019-20 has been extended multiple times to December 31. Therefore, only a few days are left.

**IKEA India FY20 loss widens to ₹720 cr**

New Delhi: Furniture retailer IKEA India saw its net loss widen to ₹720.1 crore in the financial year ended March 2020 as against ₹685.4 crore in the financial year ended March 2019, according to Registrar of Companies filing shared by market intelligence firm Tofler. However, net sales grew 64.68 per cent.

**Dish TV gets demand notice of ₹4,164.05 cr**

New Delhi: Direct-to-home operator Dish TV on Friday said it has received a demand notice from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for payment of ₹4,164.05 crore, which includes licence fee and interest. The company said it is studying the communication of the government to determine next steps.

# Manufacturing companies log softer decline in Q2 sales

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

INDIA's economic conditions continue to improve led by uptick in manufacturing activity. Data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed that sales of manufacturing companies returned to recovery mode with a softer contraction of 4.3 per cent (Y-o-Y) in the second quarter of the current financial year (Q2 FY21). In the previous quarter that was hit by nationwide lockdowns due to Covid, demand shrunk 41.1 per cent.

The recovery was led by iron and steel, food products, cement, automobile and pharmaceuticals companies, revealed data on the performance of the private corporate sector during the second quarter. "Manufacturing firms reported sales of ₹5.99 lakh crore in the second quarter, compared to ₹3.97 lakh crore in April-June quarter," said RBI, adding that the data has been drawn from abridged quarterly financial results of 2,637 listed non-government non-financial companies.

As for services, the sales growth of Information Technology (IT) sector remained steady at 3.6 per cent in Q2 FY 2020-21 over last year, while sales of non-IT sector also registered lower contraction of 14.5 per cent led by expansion in sales of telecommunication and real estate companies. As per the data, sales of non-IT firms and IT firms during the second quarter stood at ₹80,842 crore and ₹1.01 lakh crore, respectively. "Operating profits of manufacturing companies increased on the back of savings in expenditure; operating profits of services (both IT and non-IT) companies also increased in Q2," RBI said.

Furthermore, firms responding to RBI's industrial outlook survey in its 91st round were hopeful that the upturn that commenced in Q2 would gain momentum. Their optimism was based on the availability of finance, a recovery in external demand and the job scenario.

# RIL to re-brand its sports arm IMG-R, buys 50% stake

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
@ New Delhi

MUKESH Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire 50 per cent shares held by IMG Singapore Pte. Ltd in IMG-Reliance Ltd, for a cash consideration not exceeding ₹52.08 crore, the company said in a regulatory filing on Friday. IMG Singapore Pte. Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of IMG which holds 50 per cent of the share capital of IMG-R. Post completion of acquisition, IMG-R will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of RIL and will be rebranded by the company, RIL said.

IMG-R is engaged in the business of creation, management, implementation and commercialization of sporting, fashion and entertainment events in India.

In 2010, RIL had formed a similar joint venture with IMG Worldwide, an international sports marketing and management company to develop, market and manage sports and entertainment in India. IMG is a global leader in sports, fashion, events and media, operating in over 30 countries, part of the Endeavor network.

IMG-R recorded a turnover of ₹181.70 crore, ₹195.55 crore and ₹158.26 crore; and net profit of ₹16.35 crore, ₹19.25 crore and ₹15.82 crore in FY20, FY19 and FY18, respectively.

"No governmental or regulatory approvals are required for the aforesaid acquisition and the acquisition is expected to be completed during this calendar year," said RIL, adding that the acquisition does not fall within related party transactions and none of RIL's promoter or promoter group or even the group companies have any interest in the transaction.

**No governmental or regulatory approvals are required for the aforesaid acquisition and the acquisition is expected to be completed during this calendar year** —Reliance Industries

# RBI shortlists four more start-ups in first cohort to push digital payments

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ Bengaluru

THE Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has shortlisted four start-ups — CityCash, ToneTag, Ubona Technologies, and Eroute Technologies — to push offline payments for the underserved population in the country though its regulatory sandbox initiative.

Total number of start-ups in the first cohort is now six with two firms having joined the club in November. The central bank's programme announced last year envisages to promote three fintech areas: offline payments, feature phone and contactless transactions especially for the population living in areas where the internet connectivity is still a concern. Under the regulatory sandbox initiative, the start-ups will test their applications in a secure environment using a dummy data which upon the successful implementation, will be scaled in a real environment through partnerships with banks and non-banking financial companies.

During the pandemic, the RBI had emphasised on the need for digital adoption in the financial sector and urged start-ups to develop deep-tech solutions to limit the dependency on cash on the lines of UPI as well as cardless cash withdrawals.

ROUND-UP

# *Start-ups in 2020: Funding deals drop 30% at 765 but 11 firms turn unicorns*

BISMAH MALIK @ Bengaluru

INDIA'S start-up ecosystem has taken one of the worst hits in 2020, impacted by Covid-19 disruption, blocking of Chinese funds and app bans.

Funding in start-ups for the year was estimated to be 30 per cent lower over last year at $8.4 billion. Overall, there were just 765 deal closures during January-November 2020, data sourced from Burgeon Law, a firm that deals with early-stage start-up investments, showed.

However, the pandemic could not dampen the sky-high valuations for start-ups, with 11 new unicorns, or billion dollar companies, taking birth this year — the highest so far. These are fintech apps such as Razorpay and Pine Labs, FirstCry, lifestyle retailer Nykaa, Bengaluru-based SaaS start-up PostMan, Unacademy, Cars24, Zenoti, Daily Hunt and Glance. In 2019, nine start-ups turned unicorns, according to data from Venture Intelligence.

The fundraise this year was almost equivalent to the funds raised in 2015. Unicorns such as Byju's, ReNew Power, OYO Rooms, Swiggy, and Zomato are some companies that have garnered most of the funding. Sector-wise, ed-tech bagged $1.8 billion, followed by fin-tech ($1.58 billion), prop-tech ($1.03 billion), food-tech ($0.6 billion) and e-commerce/retail ($ 0.53 billion), the report noted.

As Covid-19 hit businesses worldwide, the start-ups also felt the impact although for some segments like edtech, e-commerce, food delivery, digital payments,e-gaming, the revenues were back to pre-COVID levels towards the end of the year. However, the retail, hospitality, travel, mobility start-ups continue to reel under pressure as people are keeping indoors and spending less on leisure or recreation activities.

Amidst the India-China standoff and subsequent modifications in the FDI regulations along with ban on Chinese apps, funding from China was also impacted. Alibaba's affiliate Ant Financial which earlier was expected to put in $150 million in food tech unicorn Zomato announced that it has put all its investment plans in India on hold following the Indian government's tough stance.

Alibaba, according to sources, was planning to raise $1 billion towards investments in India in early 2022. The Chinese internet giant has supported unicorns like Paytm, Zomato and Big Basket in India. Data from venture intelligence also suggested that funds raised by Indian startups in the first half of 2020 from Chinese investors stood at $166 million compared to$197 million in the same period during the previous year.

Overall, investors continue to place their bets on deep tech, innovative startups which had solutions for a new-normal environment across the globe.

**BILLION DOLLAR START-UPS**

| PINE LABS | FIRSTCRY | NYKAA | POSTMAN | ZERODHA | UNACADEMY | RAZORPAY | CARS24 | ZENOTI | DAILY HUNT | GLANCE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $2 billion | $1 billion | $1.2 billion | $2 billion | $3 billion | $2 billion | $1 billion | $1 billion | $1 billion | $1 billion | $1 billion |
| Funds raised from Mastercard, Lonepine Capital | $150 million funds raise from SoftBank | Steadview capital, actors Aalia Bhatt, Katrina Kaif invested | Recently raised $150 million | Grew manifold without any funding | Raised more than $360 million from SoftBank, etc. | The start-up has raised $100 million from GIC, Sequoia | Received $200 million funding | Entered unicorn club with $160 million fundraise | $100 million raised from Google, Microsoft | Google, Mithril Capital invested $150 million in the start-up |

## Federer, Serena among entries for Australian Open

Roger Federer and Serena Williams were among the entries announced Thursday for the coronavirus-disrupted Australian Open. All the world's top players have signed on, led by world number ones Novak Djokovic and Ashleigh Barty. There was a question mark over Swiss great Federer, who warned this month he was in a "race against time" to be fit after two rounds of knee surgery.



# ACCIDENTAL SKIPPER IN FOCUS

Rahane showed promise as stand-in three years ago, but MCG will be a different challenge considering his form

VENKATA KRISHNA B @ Chennai

JUDGING a captain by two Tests is too early. Especially if they come 18 months apart and the third one takes as much time as the second. While he didn't really need to do much in the one against Afghanistan, the Dharamsala Test against Australia, with series on the line, showed glimpses of what Ajinkya Rahane the captain could offer. In Virat Kohli's absence, he went on to hand a debut to Kuldeep Yadav, despite having Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja in the XI.

On those four days in Dharamsala, Rahane showed he was more of a bowlers' captain, with something up his sleeve all the time. Be it field placements or rotating bowlers, he never allowed Australia to settle down. On Saturday, in Melbourne, Rahane faces his biggest test yet as captain. First and foremost he has to ensure the team puts the Adelaide defeat behind. "See, comparatively we had two good days and just one bad hour, where we lost it completely," he said on the eve of the second Test.

While there are positives, what 36 all out has done to India's confidence will be known only when they face Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood. Though none expected India to be 1-0 up heading into Melbourne, there are areas to be addressed. Rahane has a huge task. More than captain Kohli, India will miss Kohli the batsman. This is where Rahane's challenge lies. He has to ensure India don't miss their best batsman, as Australians would no doubt come hard at him.

With a slot opening up in Kohli's absence, he refused to reveal where he would bat. Even in the practice match against Australia A, with Kohli choosing to rest, Rahane was at No 5, which will most likely be the case at MCG too, with Hanuma Vihari moving two slots up. Before departing, Kohli had said he is excited to see how Rahane raises his game. On Friday, the stand-in captain was not ready to invite added pressure. "It is a proud moment for me leading India. Obviously it is a great opportunity, responsibility as well, but I don't want to take any pressure. I think what I want to do is back my team. So focus is not on me, it is all about the team and how we want to do well as a team," he said.

Ajinkya Rahane (left) will look to fill void left by Virat Kohli, the batsman

LIVE ON SONY TEN 1/3, FROM 5 AM

Full story: newindianexpress.com

### Second essay

With India looking to put behind Adelaide debacle, here are the talking points ahead of the second Test in Melbourne...

**CHANGES APLENTY**

As expected India have made changes. Apart from replacements for Virat Kohli and Mohammed Shami, who in this case happen to Ravindra Jadeja and Mohammed Siraj (debut), Shubman Gill comes in place of Prithvi Shaw at the top. Also, Rishabh Pant takes over the wicketkeeper's slot from Wriddhiman Saha. This means India are playing Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin in a Test outside Asia and West Indies for the first time since Old Trafford 2014.

**ALL IS WELL**

Australia will be without the injured David Warner. There are no changes in XI which played in Adelaide.

# Bopanna to team up with Sousa at Oz Open

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

ROHAN Bopanna will partner Portugal's Joao Sousa (World No 75) to begin the 2021 season, including at the Australian Open. "I was going to play with Austria's Jurgen Melzer initially but after the dates changed, that wasn't feasible. So I have decided to play with Sousa," he told this daily. The first event they will play as a pair is at an ATP 250 event in Melbourne, beginning January 31. Post that, they will play at the Australian Open.

Because of the regulations, it's not going to be easy, it's something the 40-year-old concedes. For him to play the event beginning January 31, he has to be onsite from January 15. "I am leaving India on January 14, serve my two weeks of quarantine, do multiple Covid-19 tests and get ready for the 250." The one good thing is that they will be allowed to practice during quarantine. "We can practice five hours everyday, but the five hours will include everything... gym work, physio, recovery work in the pool as well as playing on the court." However, the World No 39 isn't complaining. "I am just happy because playing amid the pandemic is not easy, so, yeah."

He had been subjected to about 40 Covid-19 tests while he was playing from August to November. More tests await. "There will be one before I leave, one upon arrival and five tests in two weeks before quarantine finishes." His plans after the Australian swing is evolving. "One good thing is I am not defending a lot of points in that three-month stretch up to the French Open. I have to play with somebody which will enable to play in the Masters events."

EXPRESS READ

### Ex-England batsman Edrich dies at 83

LONDON COLNEY: England's former "fearless" opening batsman John Edrich has died at the age of 83, the England and Wales Cricket Board announced on Friday. Diagnosed with leukaemia in 2000 the left-hander scored 103 first-class centuries. He played 77 Tests, scoring 5,138 runs at an average of 43.54.

### Covid forces FIFA to defer U-20, U-17 WCs

PARIS: FIFA has postponed next year's under-20 World Cup in Indonesia and under-17 tournament in Peru until 2023 due to coronavirus. In a statement, FIFA said that it is looking forward to working with both host countries "to organise successful tournaments" in 2023.

# Chauhan camp opposes prez Raja's candidature

ATREYO MUKHOPADHYAY @ Chennai

DISPUTES do not end in the All India Chess Federation (AICF). A day after candidates for the elections submitted their names, the faction headed by BS Chauhan objected the candidature of PR Venketrama Raja and RM Dongre, who have filed nominations for president and secretary, respectively.

Saturday being marked for scrutiny of nominations, it's possible that returning officer Justice (retd) K Kannan will hear the objections. A list of validly nominated candidates will be released after that. Elections will be held online on January 4.The Chauhan camp argues that Raja and Dongre are not elected members of any state association. They add that according to the National Sports Development Code, this makes them ineligible to contest in the elections. "Elected representatives of the state associations should be eligible to represent their respective state association in the national sports federation meetings," said Naresh Sharma, candidate for treasurer from this group.

The Raja faction refuted their claims. "Nowhere is it mentioned that only elected members of state units can contest. This is another attempt by the other group to disrupt proceedings," said Dongre, who represents Maharashtra. Raja represents Tamil Nadu. Raja's rival for the top post is Sanjay Kapoor of UP.

# Selector's job is thankless: Mohanty

TANMAY DAS @ Bhubaneswar

Debasis Mohanty is a colossal figure in Odisha cricket. First international cricketer from the state, he has now become the first from Odisha to make it to the national senior selection committee. Excerpts from a chat with the former medium-pacer, who played two Tests and 45 ODIs...

**When will the new committee start working?**
First of all, I say thanks to the BCCI and Odisha Cricket Association. The first assignment of the committee is to select the squad for the England series coming up in February. There will be four Tests, three ODI and five T20Is.

**Selectors end up being criticised a lot of times. Your comments?**
A selector's job is a thankless job. In my opinion, you cannot satisfy each and every person. Being selectors, there is pressure on us. As a team, we will take all possible steps to ensure that we do not miss out on any talent.

**What will be the parameters to catch the attention of the selectors?**
Constant and continuous performance is the only parameter to get into the national team. My aim will be to see no injustice is done to any player.

**Three of the five selection committee members played together...**
It's a coincidence that Abey Kuruvilla, Harvinder Singh and me played together for the national team. We know each other very closely. I am hopeful this will help us form a better team.

**Having served as a junior selector, whom do you want to see in the senior squad?**
I'm fortunate to have had the chance to work with junior players. I have a feeling that in future, Ravi Bishnoi, Kartik Tyagi, Akash Singh and Priyam Garg will be in contention to get into the senior team.

**What is your message for Odisha cricketers?**
The OCA is moving in the right direction. Former players have joined the association, which is a positive development. We have talented players. If they are consistent, the likes of Rajesh Mohanty and Subhransu Senapati may make it to the team.

# Vinesh set for overseas training

FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

AFTER nine months of uncertainty, wrestler Vinesh Phogat will look to start afresh when she leaves for a 40-day overseas training camp. The trip has been sanctioned under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme.

The camp will take place from December 28 to January 24 at Vasas Sports Club in Budapest and from January 24 to February 5 at the Olympic Training Centre in Szczyrk in Poland. She will be accompanied by sparring partner Priyanka Phogat and physiotherapist Poornima Raman Ngomdir. Her personal Hungarian coach, Woller Akos, will join her in Budapest. The cost of this outing will be ₹15.51 lakh.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

### Managers seek Xmas cheer

Slaven Bilic's sacking by West Brom last week made him the earliest managerial departure in a Premier League season for six years. The next sacking may not be too far away, with several bosses having question marks over their futures. Here are three who need some Xmas cheer...

**ARTETA LOOKS TO OVERCOME BLUES**

Mikel Arteta's FA Cup success last season and then victory over Liverpool in the Community Shield suggested the turbulent period for Arsenal under Unai Emery had been laid to rest. However, heading into a tough home clash with Chelsea on Saturday, Arteta's future after just over a year is in doubt. The 38-year-old has overseen their worst start since the 1974/75 season — they have scored just 12 goals — and lie just four points above the relegation zone.

**ACID TEST FOR BRUCE'S BOYS**

Newcastle United look reasonably comfortable in 12th place. However, with a trip to Man City on Saturday and then welcoming Liverpool a few days later, the eight points separating them from the relegation zone could be whittled away. Manager Steve Bruce is believed to enjoy the support of Magpies owner Mike Ashley but there are growing rumblings of discontent from the fans.

**FINAL CUT FOR BLADES' WILDER**

The Blades' board have retained faith with Chris Wilder despite garnering just two points this season — the worst start in Premier League history. Wilder is living off the currency he gained through guiding Sheffield to the Premier League and then ninth spot last term. Wilder has a tough test at home to Everton on Saturday but the board's patience may snap if he fails to secure points at Burnley on Tuesday.

**FIXTURES:** Saturday: Leicester vs Man Utd (6 pm), Arsenal vs Chelsea (11 pm), Manchester City vs Newcastle (1.30 am), Aston Villa vs Crystal Palace (8.30 pm), Fulham vs Southampton (8.30 pm), Sheffield United vs Everton (1.30 am). *Live on Star Sports Select 1/2*

# Chennaiyin take on winless East Bengal, eye top-4 rise

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Indian Super League returns after a short Christmas break with Chennaiyin FC eyeing a top-four spot when they take on bottom-placed SC East Bengal at the Tilak Maidan on Saturday.

The two-time champions are eighth with eight points from six games. A win would put them equal with fourth-placed NorthEast United FC and FC Goa. East Bengal have not won a game so far and have two points.

Chennaiyin's problem has been scoring goals. They have just five so far. Only two of those goals came from open play. In the previous game against FC Goa which they won 2-1, the margin of victory could have been higher but for profligacy.

Coach Csaba Laszlo is not worried. "We have to be focussed while finishing especially when we create so many chances. The misses are not because of a lack of confidence but at the end of the day three points is what matters the most."

East Bengal have scored the least (3) and conceded the joint-most (11). "We are getting closer. The boys have not let their heads drop and are trying their best. The morale is high," said coach Robbie Fowler.


केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA UNDERTAKING)

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**SALE NOTICE**

**E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002**

1. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021,** from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.1,02,36,852/-** (Rupees one crore two lakhs thirty six thousand eight hundred and fifty two only) as on 30.11.2020, together with future interest, expenses and costs etc till realisation due to ARM Branch II, Bangalore of Canara Bank from **M/s.SDEC Technologies Inc & others.**
The reserve price will be **Rs.71.78 Lakhs** and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.7,17,800/-.** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 at 5.00pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** All that part and parcel of property bearing no.163 situated at Jarakabandekaval Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk now within the limit of Greater Bangalore City Corporation and the property bearing Khatha no.393, old Khatha no.54/3+53/1A, 1c, 1D and presently 4th Stage, Srinidhi Layout, off-MS Palya-Vidyaranyapura Road, at MS Palya, Jarakabandekaval, Bangalore 560097 measuring East to West 45 feet and from North to South 37+14/2 feet along with a house constructed thereon bounded on the East by site bearing no.162, West by Private property, North by road and South by Private property.

2. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021**, from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.2,37,96,000/-** (Rupees two crores thirty seven lakhs ninety six thousand only) as on 30/09/2020 due to ARM Branch II, Bangalore of Canara Bank with further interest, costs, expenses etc, as applicable till realization from **M/s.Astro Building Solutions & others.**
The reserve price will be **Rs.95.00 Lakhs** and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.9,50,000/-.**
The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 at 5.00 pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** All that part and parcel of Residential Building property at Site no 833, Khatha no.2362, BBMP Khatha no.2519/2362/833 formed in Sy.no.23/2 (part) situated at 19th Cross, KPC Layout, Kasavanahalli Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South taluk, Bangalore-560035 presently within the limits of BBMP measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 30 feet totally measuring 1200 sq.ft. with building thereon bounded on the East by Site No 580, West by Road, North by Site No834 and South by Site no.832.

3. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021**, from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.1,05,60,232/-** (Rupees one crore five lakhs sixty thousand two hundred and thirty two only) as on 30/09/2020 due to ARM Branch II, Bangalore of Canara Bank with further interest, costs, expenses etc, as applicable till realization from **M/s.Durga Industries & others.** The reserve price will be **Rs.47.00 Lakhs** and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.4,70,000/-.** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 at 5.00 pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** All that part and parcel of flat property bearing no.103, first floor, 'SLV Residency' at no.1680/428/25/2A, Hemavathy Water Supply road, Gundu Muneshwara Swamy Temple Road, Uttarahalli Village, Bangalore 560061 presently under BBMP, with super built up area of 1500 sq.ft. and covered car parking space in the basement with undivided share of 338 sq.ft. in the whole property bearing no.1680/428/25/2A at Uttarahalli Village, Ward no.184 measuring East to West on the Northern side 76.5 feet, on the Southern side 83 feet, North to South on the Western side 48 feet, on the Eastern side 56.5 feet. bounded on the East by Property of Chandraiah, West by Remaining portion of the same property, North by Property of Sri.Shankarappa and South by Road.

4. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021,** from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.5,08,36,000/-** (Rupees five crores eight lakhs thirty six thousand only) as on 31/12/2019 due to ARM Branch II , Bangalore of Canara Bank with further interest as applicable from **M/s.Five Star Agencies (Rs.403.25 lacs), M/s.Sadhas Agencies (Rs.105.11 lacs) and others.**
The reserve price will be **Rs.204.00 Lakhs** and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.20,40,000/-.** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 - 5.00 pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** All that piece and parcel of the residential house property situated at No.364, 8th Main Road, 27th cross, Gururaja Layout, BSK III Stage, 4th Phase, Bangalore 560085, Ward No.55 – Padmanabha Nagar, PID no.55-701-364 measuring East to West 50 feet and North to South 30 feet totally measuring 1500 square feet and bounded on the East by Road, West by Site no.353, North by Site no.365 and South by Site no.363.

5. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021,** from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.2,46,78,467/-** (Rupees two crores forty six lakhs seventy eight thousand four hundred and sixty seven only) as on 30/09/2020 due to ARM Branch II, Bangalore of Canara Bank with further interest, costs, expenses etc, as applicable till realization from **M/s.Universal Batteries & others.**
The reserve price will be **Rs.122.40 Lakhs** and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.12,24,000/-.** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 at 5.00 pm.**

**Details and full description of the property:** All that part and parcel of the flat property bearing flat no.D3-605, 6th floor, L&T South City, Sy no.91, 92 (part), 93 (part), 94, 95, 90/1 and 96/1 of Kothanur Village, Arakere MICO Layout, Bannerghatta Road, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore 560076 and measuring super built up area of 1745 sq.ft together with undivided share in land to the extent of 436.24 sq.ft. and bounded on the North by Puttenahalli Village, South by Sy no.90/2, 96/2 belongs to P Narayanaswamy, East by Arakere village and West by Natural Drain and Land of K C Puttamma & others.

6. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" condition on **29/01/2021,** from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.6,36,26,029/-** (Rupees six crores thirty six lakhs twenty six thousand and twenty nine only) as on February 2019 due to ARM Branch II, Bangalore of Canara Bank with further interest, costs and expenses as applicable till realization from **M/s.Vasanth Video Vision Pvt Ltd., Sri.G Vasanth Kumar and Smt.Jayashree Paramesh.**
The reserve price will be **Rs.2,94,20,000/-** (Rupees two crores ninety four lakhs twenty thousand only) and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.29,42,000/-.** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 at 5.00pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** 1.All that piece and parcel of residential converted property bearing bearing Survey no.98 alienated and converted for residential purpose vide ALN.SR.143/2013-14 dated 30.10.2013 from Deputy Commissioner Kolar District, Kolar situated at Dodda Ankadahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangarpet Taluk, Kolar District measuring 4 acres 38 guntas (including 12 guntas) of Kharab land and bounded on the East by Forest Land, West by Govindappa's property, North by Forest Land and South by Govindaraj's property & Government land.
2. All that piece and parcel of residential converted property bearing Survey no.116/2 alienated and converted for residential purpose vide ALN.SR.143/2013-14 dated 30.10.2013 from Deputy Commissioner Kolar District, Kolar situated at Dodda Ankadahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangarpet Taluk, Kolar District measuring 4 Guntas and bounded on the East by Forest Land, West by Block 1, North by LA SA 98 and South by Block 1 along with all rights attached thereto.

7. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021,** from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.3,07,05,773/-** as on 31.01.2020 with future interest, cost and expenses as per DRC no.714/2019 in OA no.1085/2017 due to ARM Branch II, Bangalore of Canara Bank from **M/s.Suraj Floritech rep. by its proprietor Sri.K V Sathyaprakash & others.**
The reserve price will be **Rs.2,67,30,000/-** (Rupees two crores sixty seven lakhs thirty thousand only) and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.26,73,000/-.** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 at 5.00pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** All that piece and parcel of property with building thereon bearing no.33 & 38, Katha no.486, 487 & 488 situated at ward no.30, Laggere, Yeshwanthpur, Bangalore measuring to an extent of 2680 sq.ft. bounded on the East by Road, West by Government Property, North by Site no.34 & 37 and South by Site no.32 & 39.

8. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021,** from 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M, for recovery of **Rs.2,56,45,803/-** (Rupees two crores fifty six lakhs forty five thousand eight hundred and three only) as on 30.09.2020 together with further interest, costs and expenses as applicable till realisation, due to ARM Branch II, Bangalore of Canara Bank from **M/s.HNS Distributors & others.**
The reserve price will be **Rs.1,50,42,000/-** (Rupees one crore fifty lakhs forty two thousand only) and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.15,04,200/-** (Rupees fifteen lakhs four thousand two hundred only). The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 - 5.00pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** All that part and parcel of land and building bearing no.15, part of the land in S.no.22/2, Sunkenahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk measuring 1392 sq.ft now in Bangalore Corporation limit bearing no.1, 80 feet Road, Vinayakanagar, Near Vidyapeetha Circle, Bangalore 560050 bounded on the East by Private Property, West by Property bearing old no.18, North by Road, South by Road.

9. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ARM Branch II , Bangalore of the Canara Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and " Whatever there is" on **29/01/2021**, 10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M. for recovery of **Rs.2,68,80,757/-** (Rupees two crore sixty eight lakhs eighty thousand seven hundred and fifty seven only) together with future interest, expenses and costs etc till realisation due to Canara Bank from **M/s.Narayans Punjabi Tandoor & others** in terms of RC no.890/2019 in TA 1655/2017 dated 30.03.2019 passed by DRT, Bangalore.
The reserve price will be **Rs.111.35 Lakhs** and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.11,13,500/-** The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before **27/01/2021 at 5.00pm.**
**Details and full description of the property:** All that part and parcel of property at Plot no.277-E in Hebbal Industrial Area situated in S.nos.355 of Hebbal Village, Kasaba Hobli, Mysore Taluk and District measuring 1019 sq.meters or thereabouts together with building thereon and bounded on the East by KIADB Road, West by Plot no.278-B, North by Plot no.277-D and South by Plot no.277-F.

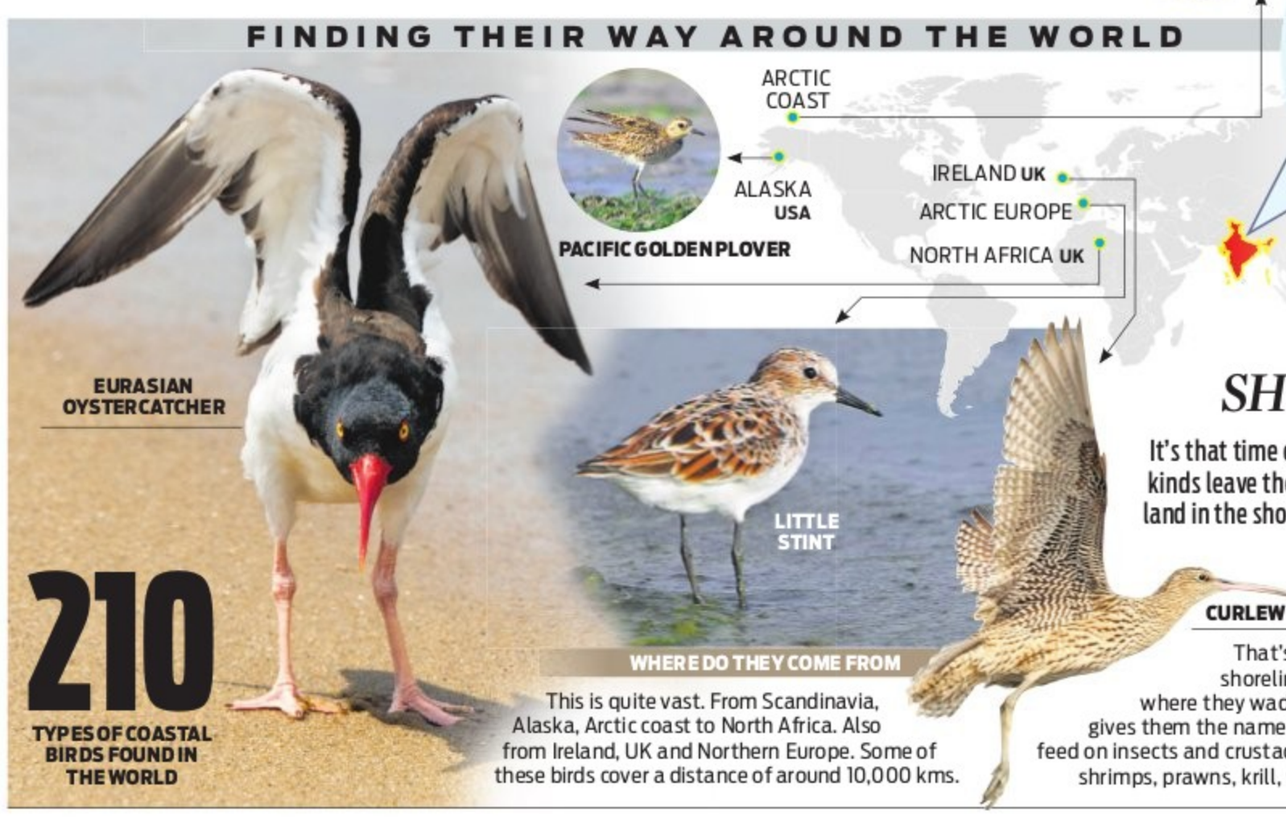
EMD amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited by way of DD favouring Authorised officer, Canara Bank, ARM Branch II, Bangalore OR through online (RTGS/NEFT/Fund Transfer) to credit the account number 6298296000001, Canara Bank, ARM Branch II, Bangalore RTGS/NEFT CODE CNRB0006298 on or before **27.01.2021 at 5.00pm.**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in https://www.canarabank.com /english/announcements/sale-notice/karnataka/ provided on the Secured Creditors' Website i.e www.canarabank.com. or may contact Chief Manager, ARM Branch II Bangalore, Ph. No. 9483544116, 080-25310065, during office hours on any working day.OR the service provider M/s.Canbank Computer Services Ltd, Bangalore - e- mail: eauction@ccsl.co.in Contact Persons & Numbers:- Mr. Pakhare DD/ Mr.Ramesh T H – 9480691777 & 8553643144.

Place: Bangalore
Date: 22.12.2020

Sd/-
Authorised Officer

Shorebirds exhibit phenotypic differences between males and females, also known as sexual dimorphism. In polygynous species, where one male mates with multiple females, dimorphisms tend to be more diverse. In monogamous species, where male mates with a single female, males typically do not have distinctive dimorphic characteristics but tend to be larger in size




**WHERE DO THEY COME FROM**

This is quite vast. From Scandinavia, Alaska, Arctic coast to North Africa. Also from Ireland, UK and Northern Europe. Some of these birds cover a distance of around 10,000 kms.

**WHY IN COASTAL REGIONS**

That's because they live along shorelines and mudflats. That's where they wade to look for food, which gives them the name 'waders'. Generally, they feed on insects and crustaceans like crabs, crayfish, shrimps, prawns, krill, woodlice, and barnacles.

**WHAT ARE THEY CALLED**

In different spots in India, the number of species seen is quite high. Curlews, whimbrels, godwits (bar-tailed & black-tailed), oystercatchers, plovers (grey, pacific golden, lesser sand, crab), common redshanks, common greenshanks, curlew sandpipers, terek sandpipers, stints (little & long-toed), various types of gulls and terns are some of them.

EXFILE • ENVIRNOMENT

## SHORE AND CERTAIN VISITORS

It's that time of the year when several parts of coastal India get avian visitors. Birds of several kinds leave their home in cooler places during winter in search of warmer climes. Many of them land in the shores of India around October and spend four-five months in these places. They are known as shorebirds...

**HOW MANY BIRDS**

According to rough estimates, over 14 lakh birds were recorded in nine places in India at the turn of the century. This figure may have decreased over the years due to degeneration of habitats and human disturbance.

**WHAT ROLE DO THEY PLAY**

Coastal birds are primary and tertiary consumers cum predators who maintain ecological balance. They recycle nutrients to the ecosystem through guano deposition, which helps local fisheries. Some of them play the role of scavengers and some of them feed on harmful insects.

*Part of Pulicat lake is in Andhra

# Decoding Japan's carbon neutral plan

Relying more on renewable energy, phasing out fossil fuel power plants will be island nation's top priority

ENVIRONMENT

TOKYO: Japan on Friday unveiled plans to boost renewable energy, phase out gasoline-powered cars and reduce battery costs as part of a bid to reach an ambitious 2050 carbon-neutral goal.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced the new 2050 goal in November, significantly moving up Japan's timeline for carbon-neutrality. On Friday, his government laid out for the first time what meeting that target will involve, including setting a provisional goal of generating more than half of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2050.

"The government's actions on the environment reflect our belief that a significant change of mindset is required and that these are not constraints for growth, rather they are drivers of growth," top government spokesman Katsunobu Kato told a regular briefing.

Japan, which is a signatory to the Paris climate deal, has been seen as reluctant to reduce its reliance on fossil fuel, despite its self-professed pride as a nation of energy-saving technologies. The country was the sixth-biggest contributor to global greenhouse emissions in 2017, according to the International Energy Agency.

The world's third largest economy still relies heavily on coal and liquefied natural gas, with most of its nuclear reactors offline since the 2011 Fukushima disaster.

Japan expects demand for electricity to surge 30-50 percent by 2050, but the nation's conservative ruling party has so far stayed lukewarm about renewable energy, though Suga has shifted the tone in recent weeks. Under the plans to boost renewables, officials are placing a new focus on offshore wind generation, with the goal of producing up to 45 gigawatts within the coming decades.

> *The government's actions on the environment reflect our belief that a significant change of mindset is required and that these are not constraints for growth, rather they are drivers of growth*
>
> Katsunobu Kato, govt spokesperson

Japan also wants to use nuclear and thermal power plants with carbon capture technology to cover 30-40 percent of the nation's electricity demand. Ammonia and hydrogen technologies are expected to fulfil about 10 percent of the nation's power needs. By the mid-2030s, the government also wants to end the sale of new passenger vehicles that are solely powered by gasoline.

Japan plans to replace them with hybrids, electric cars and cars fitted with fuel-cell engines, while bringing down the cost of batteries for those vehicles. But while officials say the new plan is ambitious, some critics believe it falls short.

Mika Ohbayashi, director of the Renewable Energy Institute, said the figures were "a poor starting point for discussions and (showed) a lack of ambition."

Japan should aim for renewable energy to cover 50-60 percent of national electricity needs by 2030, rather than wait until 2050, the think tank said.

The institution also voiced its scepticism about whether carbon capture technology will become widely available in the coming decades -- an assumption made by Japan as well as other nations in their carbon-neutral plans.

# SA rejects claim that its virus strain more lethal

VIROLOGY

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's health minister has rejected his British counterpart's claim that a new coronavirus variant in the country is more contagious or dangerous than a similar one in spreading the UK.

"At present, there is no evidence that the 501.V2 (variant) is more transmissible than the United Kingdom variant — as suggested by the British Health Secretary," Zwelini Mkhize said in a statement published late on Thursday.

"There is also no evidence that (it) causes more severe disease or increased mortality than the UK variant or any variant that has been sequenced around the world". Announcing restrictions on travel from South Africa on Wednesday, Britain's Matt Hancock had said that the variant there was "highly concerning, because it is yet more transmissible, and it appears to have mutated further" than the similar strain in Britain.

The British minister's words "have created a perception that the variant in SA has been a major factor in the second wave in UK," Mkhize said. "This is not correct."

He pointed to evidence that the British strain, which bears a similar mutation to the South African one, appeared as early as September in southeastern county Kent — "approximately a month before the South African variant appears to have developed".

# Drought spectre over South Asia

ENVIRONMENT

NEW DELHI: The frequency of the worst of droughts is projected to increase by about 1.5 times between 2035 and 2100, compared to what has been recorded from 1951-2016. These are likely to be more intense and widespread in South Asia, says a new study by Indian experts.

The study by Department of Civil Engineering and Earth Sciences, IIT-Gandhingar, said that the worst soil moisture drought during the period mentioned above occurred in 2002. It affected more than 65 per cent of South Asia and resulted in a decline in rice yield (400kg/ha). The team consisting of Vimal Mishra and Saran Aadhar conducted soil moisture simulations using a model to identify the worst soil moisture drought from 1951-2016.

The study says that droughts in South Asia pose substantial challenges to water resources, agricultural and socio-economic growth of more than two billion people. However, the most detrimental soil moisture droughts, their impact and occurrence in the observed and projected periods in South Asia remain unidentified.

"We estimated the frequency of droughts that exceeded the overall severity score of the worst drought during 1951-2016 under the future climate using 40 simulations from Community Earth System Model-Large Ensemble (CESM-LENS). The frequency of the worst droughts is projected to increase by about 1.5 times in the future (2035-2100) in comparison to the historic (1951-2016) climate," said the study.

On the possible reasons, the study says that a considerable influence of industrial aerosols was noticed in the case of one the worst droughts in South Asia. Also, the findings have implications for food and water security in one of the most densely populated regions in the world.

Droughts in South Asia are mainly driven by the failure of the summer monsoon (June-September), which is a lifeline for the millions of people in the region and provides about 80 per cent of total annual rainfall.

*— Richa Sharma*

**GESTURE OF LIFE**

Artists dressed in Christmas costumes perform in the yard of a children's hospital to greet children to mark the upcoming New Year celebrations in Moscow on Friday | AP

# Swift Swiss start of vaccinations

MEDICINE

GENEVA: Switzerland started its Covid-19 vaccine rollout on Wednesday, with a care home resident in her 90s receiving the first shot just four days after the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was authorised.

The woman, who lives in the Lucerne region in central Switzerland, was the first person in continental Europe immunised with the Pfizer-BioNTech jab in a vaccination campaign.

Switzerland is battling stubbornly high coronavirus cases, recording around 5,000 fresh infections and 100 new deaths on Wednesday, in a country of 8.6 million people.

From Tuesday, bars and restaurants began closing again across the country in a bid to rein in the outbreak, while flights to and from Britain and South Africa have been banned following the discovery of a new variant of the virus that UK officials believe spreads far more easily. Britain was the first country to deploy the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

FACT OF THE MATTER

## Korea reports record surge

HEALTH

South Korea has reported its largest daily increase in coronavirus infections on Christmas Day, as the prime minister pleaded for vigilance to arrest a viral surge that has worsened hospitalization and deaths. The 1,241 new cases confirmed by the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency on Friday brought the caseload to 54,770. Seventeen patients died in 24 hours, bringing the death toll to 773. More than 870 of the new cases were from the greater capital area, home to half of the country's 51mn population, where more than 500 infections have been linked to a huge prison in Seoul. Clusters have been popping up from just about everywhere in recent weeks.

## WHO's message

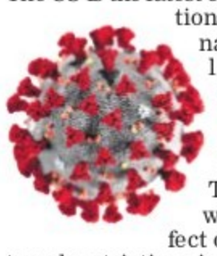
HEALTH

THE sacrifices made to protect people during the coronavirus pandemic must not be squandered over the festive period, the World Health Organization's (WHO) chief said in a Christmas message. Millions were making "heart-wrenching sacrifices" by staying away from loved ones on Christmas Day, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a video clip posted on Twitter, while others will have a missing face at family table. "We must not squander their sacrifices, nor those made by so many families who, this holiday season, will sit at family tables missing a familiar face. He said vaccines were starting to offer a way out of this pandemic crisis.

## UK fliers to US need -ve test

HEALTH

Atlanta: The US will require airline passengers from Britain to get a negative Covid-19 test before their flight, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has announced. The US is the latest country to announce new travel restrictions because of a new variant of the coronavirus that is spreading in Britain. Airline passengers from the United Kingdom will have to get negative Covid-19 tests within three days of their trip and provide the results to the airline, the CDC said in a statement on Thursday. The agency said the order will be signed on Friday and go into effect on Monday. The CDC said because of travel restrictions in place since March, air travel to the US from the UK has been cut by 90%. Last weekend, Britain's prime minister said a new variant of the coronavirus seemed to spread more easily than earlier ones and was moving rapidly through England. Dozens of countries have since barred flights from the UK.



RESTORATION

# *Oyster shells given new life as reefs off Texas coast*

BE THE CHANGE

HOUSTON: On the terrace of a seafood restaurant in Houston, Texas's largest city, a few ladies are enjoying a local oyster dish: the breaded mollusks are slathered in mayonnaise and served in a sandwich.

Sitting in the shade of a palm tree on a warm winter's day, the diners have no idea that behind the restaurant a woman is busy giving the shells a second life.

Thanks to Shannon Batte, they will soon form part of a reef in Galveston Bay, six miles (10km) away. Out of sight, the Galveston Bay Foundation employee loads seven trash cans each weighing 175 pounds (80 kilograms) onto her trailer.

The cans are full of not just oyster shells but also water, discarded oyster forks and squeezed lemons. All year round, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, she makes the rounds of the foundation's partner restaurants.

Shannon Batte

"Most people like to enjoy their oysters in any month that has an 'r' in it," said Batte. "So currently, right now, it's December, so the oyster shell collection is a little more. But due to Covid there's not quite as much shell as we've normally had in the past."

"Our customers really want to know where do our oysters come from and what do you do with those shells," said Tom Tollett, owner of Tommy's Seafood Restaurant & Oyster Bar, quoted by the foundation. It was here that the first oyster shells were collected almost 10 years ago, in March 2011.

The programme has grown since then to include some 10 restaurants. Displayed on menus or tables, logos and diagrams show guests the fate of the thousands of shells collected: they will simply return to the waters where they were formed. New oysters will settle and develop on these shells.

Galveston Bay is home to a seafood-rich ecosystem thanks to the brackish mixture of fresh water from rivers and salt water from the Gulf of Mexico. In 1845, when Texas became a US state, the town of Galveston already had its own oyster bar.

But in September 2008, Hurricane Ike, which killed 113 people in the United States, destroyed more than half of the oysters' habitat, smothering their reefs with sediment.

To rebuild the ecosystem, the shells are now dumped each spring on rocks placed at the bottom of the water. Where the current is stronger, the shells are piled into nets and erected as dams. This becomes a new habitat and by breaking the waves, also helps fight soil erosion.

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**DAY'S DIARY**

## 'The Exorcist' premieres

*The Exorcist*, adapted for the big screen by William Peter Blatty from his eponymous 1971 novel and directed by Willian Friedkin, premiered on this day in 1973

**CURSED FOR REAL?**

There are tales about ominous events surrounding the year-long shoot, including the deaths of nine people associated with the production, and a fire; two actors died before its release

**SPIDER WALKING**

The contortionist Linda R Hager was hired to perform the famous 'spider walk' scene; she was able to do it with a harness and flying wire hung above the staircase

**SAVED BY THE TECH**

The scene was deleted before the film's debut, partly because there was no way to hide the wires. It was 30 years later that the scene was added after the wires were digitally removed

**MG Srinivas brings Rajesh on board Old Monk**

PG 4

## Happy feet

Samyuktha Hegde loves to dance. So much so that the actor even penned a few heartfelt words on Instagram. She uploaded a photo of her making a graceful leap and captioned the photo, "Dear Dance, I'm glad you came into my life, I would be nothing without you. You make me feel alive Your's faithfully, Sam". That's one sweet love letter!

## Partner for life

Hitha Chandrashekar had a working Christmas but the actor didn't mind. In fact, she took to Instagram to pay credit to the person who made it possible for her to do this: Her husband. In a story, she said thanks to her husband who "defies gender roles and stays home to take care of Goli (their pet) when I have work. Working on Christmas is the best thing that could've happened and I can do it worry-free because of him". Talk about couple goals!

With bite-sized dishes, table partitions and pre-recorded music, restaurants are gearing up for New Year bookings with trepidation

# CAUTION FOR STARTERS

MONIKA MONALISA

The past two days have been a whirlwind for restaurants and pubs in the city, with many changes with regard to the night curfew rules. The last minute cancellation may have come as a relief but owners are still uncertain about more changes. Chethan Hegde, owner of the 1522 chain of pubs, says "We had many cancellations due to the change in timings of the curfew. It was eventually called off but people already made alternative plans. It's also risky because what if the curfew is implemented again?" The pub, however, is keeping doors open with a limited New Year special menu. "The menu is small so that the focus is on people having a good time. We have also made temporary partitions between tables," says Hegde, adding that in an industry like this, it is hardly possible to plan a backup if a curfew is re-implemented.

The Reservoire, in Koramangala, is also serving a limited menu. "We have reduced the menus to bite-sized dishes. There are no platters, just starters, which will make the service fast moving," says Prathik Shetty, founder of the restaurant-cum-pub. They have also removed the buffet service and are encouraging pre-bookings to avoid huge crowds gathering in front of the restaurant.

Akanksha Chaudhary, who is assistant director of Hard Rock Cafe's marketing and sales, says they are having a specially-curated menu for December, which they are going to continue. "Our street style comfort food festival is on, and available on Dec. 31. It has dishes like Chicken Lollypop or Tandoori Momos, which are great to be paired with beverages," says Chaudhary. Since live gigs are banned, the restaurant had to cancel all performances lined up. They are now going ahead with pre-recorded curated music.

Amit Ahuja from Misu says rather than experimenting with their menu, they're going with tried-and-tested dishes. "We have not made much change to our menu. Since our focus is on dining, we want people to have a great time with family and friends," says Ahuja. Sharing similar views, Kuncheria Marattkulam, co-founder of Uru Brewpark, says they are also focusing on food over everything else. "Though there are some cocktails and our popular brews lined up, we are still focusing on the main course. Our prime revenue is from food, not beverage," explains Marattkulam, adding that they too had to cancel the live music they had lined up.

**We have reduced the menus to bite-sized dishes. There are no platters, just starters, which will make the service fast moving. We have also removed the buffet service**

Prathik Shetty, founder, The Reservoire

BENGALURU BEATS

# 'NEED BETTER WAYS TO MANAGE WASTE IN CITY'

• **Dr. Aruna Muralidhar**
Associate director, Fortis La Femme Hospital, Bangalore

Bengaluru still maintains its title of Garden City of India due to its protected parks and gardens. However, due to haphazard constructions and demolition of old buildings, the debris has become a blemish on its image. Another issue that haunts the city is the ubiquitous piles of garbage, strewn on roadsides, empty sites, footpaths, etc. Bengaluru alone is said to be producing 6,000 tonnes of garbage a day, of which nearly 90 tonnes is constituted by non-biodegradable sanitary napkin waste and another 60 tonnes are diapers, which end up in landfills, sewers or are burnt at suboptimal temperatures releasing toxic gases.

Although BBMP has taken various steps to curb the problem with waste segregation at source in residential areas and setting up waste management plants, the onslaught by the increasing population and the ensuing packaged and sanitary waste, is posing a burden. The issue needs to be addressed in a multipronged manner.

The onus lies on every resident. Responsible consumerism, avoiding overpackaging, recycling, waste segregation, home or community composting; segregation and disposal of sanitary waste separately or adopting menstrual aids such as cloth pads and menstrual cups will help bring down the volume of waste generated.

**SOLUTION:** Setting up well-functioning waste energy plants, composting units and waste segregation units in prime areas without much transport (via open tractors and trucks) involved will need a strong will from BBMP and a sustained support from the private sector. With institutions like Indian Institute of Science and several large IT companies, Bengaluru can be bailed out by the combined efforts towards developing sustainable technology solutions in waste management. Stricter infrastructure laws for upcoming residential complexes and spreading awareness in the crowded areas and urban slums can help reduce waste generation. We all want a Silicon Valley nestling in the Garden City, and not a concrete jungle strewn with garbage.

Let your mixed feelings about Bengaluru get stirred up, as an influential person talks about things nice and nasty about the city in this weekly column

City student's new single, her second one this year, is all about the sun, sand and surf as she lyrically captures her memories of Goa

# FLOWING WITH MEMORIES

EXPRESS FEATURES

SOME children may take to the sea and surf like a moth to flame but not Frizzell D'Souza. As a child, this singer-songwriter remembers loving her visits to the beaches of Goa while also being terrified of the waves. Her new single, *Drown Away*, captures all these mixed emotions and more that she feels about beach getaways. "I had irrational fears of drowning even in the shallow areas and would often hold my mum's or sister's hand to just step into the water. The song encapsulates our entire journey of driving up to Goa in my dad's car every year in December around Christmas. Interestingly, it was during these drives that I grew a liking for music," says the 21-year-old student at RV College of Architecture.

Her second single comes just months after her first one, called *New*, came out earlier this year. Incidentally, D'Souza began writing *Drown Away* before *New*. "It was this three-chord progression that made me feel extremely nostalgic, and these memories seemed to fit right into this melody. I picked up a couple of old photo albums and went through footage that my dad recorded during those years to get a clearer picture. Then, it just seemed like the song wrote itself," says the singer, who is also a cover artiste on YouTube. The new tune, which falls under the acoustic pop genre, has lyrics like: 'She saw trees running back and forth and wondered why the sun would stay there/ It was cooler on the hills but closer to the sun, questions to ask and she didn't know why,/ She held mamas hand and everything was okay.' Behind these lines lie memories of swaying coconut trees, rocks on Vagator beach, or the feeling of being drenched in salty water with cold breeze brushing past, says D'Souza, and adds, "But the one that tops it all is where my mom tries getting me in to the water but I sprint back as soon as I see waves approaching."

**The song encapsulates our journey of driving up to Goa every year in December around Christmas. Interestingly, it was during these drives that I grew a liking for music**

Frizzell D'Souza, musician

The new single was produced in a studio unlike her first song, which was produced remotely.

Cover art for the song *Drown Away*

The writing process too had a different approach. Since *New* (which revolves around the fragility of aging love) was fictional, D'Souza could play around with the story. "*Drown Away*, on the other hand, is a memoir of sorts and all I had to do was jot down the existing images in my head," she says. All her original music has been managed by the artist collective, The Urban Weaver.

Currently in the fourth year of her five-year degree, D'Souza has no plans to pursue full-time music post her graduation. She is pursuing online classes from Mangaluru and says her first year of college saw her following the stereotype of no time for anything outside academics. "This is a false belief that many architecture students are preached to in their initial years and one I want to break. You will always find time for the things you love without having to make compromises."

Mahita Nagaraj of Caremongers India on how chat with Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg gave her a 'renewed sense of purpose'

# 'Talk' of the town

VIDYA IYENGAR

Mahita Nagaraj, who started the Caremongers India initiative during the lockdown, has more to be happy about now. This Bengaluru resident was recently invited to interact with Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer of Facebook, to share her experience of community building. This was a part of 'Fuel for India 2020' with the programme called 'Celebrating the Power of Communities'. Nagaraj went the extra mile during the lockdown by bringing together over 55,000 volunteers. Her initiative used social media, particularly Facebook and WhatsApp, to create a group of volunteers, who ventured out, offering help to those who needed essential supplies.

Nagaraj is no newbie to the limelight, having taken several initiatives that have been recognised at the national level. In 2015 she was invited to the sets of *Aaj Ki Raat Hai Zindagi* where she shared her experience with Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan on her brainchild Feed Your Neighbour. "But I look at every opportunity with the same excitement and thrill. I am just grateful that all of this is happening," she says.

For the conversation with Sandberg, Nagaraj was admittedly nervous but the "down-to-earth, warm and friendly" nature of Sandberg put her at ease. "There was no hurry about the conversation or any mention of the limited time. It was a very free-flowing conversation," says Nagaraj, who had her mother and son cheering on.

For Nagaraj, there are two takeways – a renewed sense of purpose and a confirmation of her firm belief that it pays to be kind. "I just knew I am walking the right path after interacting with a stalwart like Sandberg who is so inspirational with so many Lean In circles. The work I am doing is only a drop in the ocean, and can only aspire to achieve what she has," says Nagaraj, who now wants to make her reach wider.

Quite modest about all that she has done, Nagaraj wishes she had a few more hours in a day, and some more pairs of hands. "There is so much more that I want to do, but I am happy that some have benefitted from what I have done," she says.

**Sheryl Sandberg's down-to-earth, warm and friendly nature put me at ease. There was no hurry about the conversation or any mention of the limited time. It was a very free-flowing conversation – Mahita Nagaraj**

# WHAT WHEN WHY WHERE

## SHAAN'S NIGHT

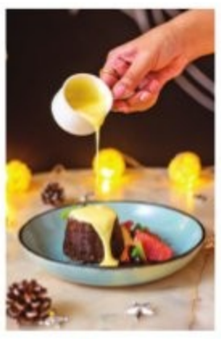
Watch singer Shaan perform his rendition of some of Canadian musician Bryan Adam's popular songs in Paytm Insider's Jim Beam Originals. Tune in today at 9 pm. Tickets are priced at ₹799. **Book tickets at:** insider.in

## BOOKS BY WEIGHT

Shop for books by weight where different categories of books can be billed for different price ranges. For example, ₹300/kg for children's books, ₹300/kg for non-fiction and coffee table books, etc. **Where:** Safina Plaza Main Hall, #84/85, Infantry Road **When:** Till Dec. 27

## ART FESTIVAL

In the virtual avatar of the India Art Festival, patrons will get to see total of 45 stalls, 20 art galleries and 250 artists exhibiting 1,000 artworks. **When:** Till Dec. 27 **Where:** indiaartfest.in/



## WINTER MENU

Here's some winter fare that can chase away those chills. Prepared using local seafood, meats, and seasonal produce, the menu contains a mix of warming soups, mains and desserts. **Where:** Smoke House Deli, Lavelle Road and Indiranagar **When:** Ongoing

**ART QUEST 2** Live and online painting competition hosted by Emagic Academy **WHEN** Tomorrow, 11.30 am - 1.30 pm **To register, call:** 9941983758

## DIY perfume journey

ISAK Labs brings to you a unique box to stimulate your olfactory senses and 'Make your own Perfume'. There are 12 ingredients/bases ready for perfumery along with an ISAK Lab Workbook with notes, formula sheets, and space to take down your personal notes. The detailed instructions and steps will guide you through the process, helping you explore your creativity while mesmerising you through the creation of your unique bespoke perfume. Priced at ₹2,700. **Available at:** isakfragrances.com, silkayra.com, storyofindia.in, scentkraft.com

## Festive menu

Sly Granny has introduced a new festive special menu, which includes Sweet Potato and Gruyere Croquettes, Braised Pork Belly, and Christmas cocktails like Spiced Apple Pie, Snow Capped Sour, and Mulled wine. **Where:** Sly Granny, Indiranagar **When:** Till Jan. 5

## New year special

Say hello to the new year with Johnnie Walker presents NYE 2021: The Party You Deserve. The cover charge (Singles: ₹2,000 & Couples: ₹3,000) includes your food and drinks. **Where:** Social branches in city **When:** Dec. 31, 4pm - 9.30pm

## Shop till you drop

Head to this store and check out jewellery and clothing by different designers. The collection promises something for everyone with its different price ranges. **Where:** The Emerald Store, Richmond Town **When:** Ongoing

**New store**

Melorra, a jewellery brand, has opened a brick-and-mortar store in the city. **Where:** Orion Mall, Rajajinagar

## Ethnic wear

Check out the Kala Silk Cotton Expo for some dress materials, sarees and handicraft items from various parts of the country. Collections from 20 states, including Rajasthan, Bihar, and UP have been included in the 100 stalls. When: Till Dec. 29, 10am onwards Where: Sri Dwarka Convention Hall, Nanjappa Circle

## Festive shopping

Phoenix Marketcity Bengaluru is all decked up in Christmas decor that includes a lights display, a Christmas tree, Santa welcoming visitors and more. Shoppers can also stand a chance to win prizes worth ₹1 crore, car, bike, etc. **Where:** Phoenix Marketcity **When:** Ongoing

# QUICK FIX

## What's cooking

**IN YOUR KITCHEN?**
We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at cityexpresschn@gmail.com.

## MORINGA PARATHA

**INGREDIENTS**

- **Wheat flour, Gram flour, Curd** - 2 tbsp ■ **Moringa leaves** - 1 cup
- **Turmeric, ajwain** - 1/4 tsp each ■ **Garam masala** - 1 tsp
- **Roasted cumin (jeera powder)** - 1 tsp ■ **Ginger** - small piece, grated
- **Green chilli** - chopped ■ **Coriander leaves** - a bunch, chopped
- **Oil** - 2 tbsp ■ **Salt** to taste ■ **Red chilli powder** to taste (optional)

**METHOD**

- Wash the moringa leaves and chop roughly. Add all the ingredients to the wheat flour. Knead to a soft dough.
- Roll into chapathi/paratha. On a tawa, cook the parathas with ghee or oil.
- Serve hot with a side dish.

**— Rama Shecar, Kochi**

# FIT BIT

## TRATAKA

(FIXED GAZING)

In Sanskrit, Trataka means 'to look' or 'to gaze'. As such, the meditation technique involves starting at a single point of focus. This is typically the flame of a candle, but other objects that may be used include a dot on the wall, an object of worship, a deity, flower, mountain, rising sun or moon. However, a flame is believed to work best. Meditating in this way energizes the Ajna (third eye) chakra, which is associated with intuition and wisdom, as well as psychic abilities. Traditionally, it allows the past, present and future to be perceived with equal clarity. It strengthens eye muscles and improves vision and memory. It also helps in keeping insomnia at bay.

**STEPS**

- Sit straight in a relaxed way in a dark/quiet room. Keep a burning candle at a distance of one or two feet.
- Use a stand of appropriate height to make sure the candle is at the same level as the eyes.
- Keep your body steady and gaze at the bright spot of the flame just above the wick. Avoid looking at the top of the flame. It may flick and lose concentration.
- Look either at the bright red spot just above the wick or at the top of it.
- Gaze at the flame without blinking the eyes for a few seconds or minutes.
- Now, you can see that you will be aware of only the flame. You will lose body consciousness and feel that you are one with the flame.
- When the eyes get tired, slowly close the eyes and relax. Sometimes, the eyes may water. Keep it closed till the strain is relieved. When the eyes are closed, try to see the image of the flame in the space in front of the forehead. Witness this in eternal flame as long as it appears.
- Slowly open the eyes. You may blink a few times to relieve any strain. Repeat this process a few times according to your interest.

**BENEFITS**

- Good for the eyes. It strengthens the muscles surrounding the eyes.
- Removes insomnia and improves the quality of sleep.
- Removes distractions in the mind, thereby increasing the power of concentration.
- Improves mental and nervous stability.
- Relieves headache, migraine etc.
- Freedom from negative thoughts.
- Helps to reduce anger and sharpens eyesight.

**LIMITATIONS**

- People suffering from serious eye disorders, glaucoma and high myopia, should avoid this.
- Not suitable for people with psychic problems – schizophrenia or hallucinations.

*— by N Elumalai, PhD scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai*

# SOUND BOARD

**GREAT WOMEN OF BUSINESS**
From Coco Chanel to Julia Child, in this special 12-episode series, expect stories of the triumphs of individuals ahead of their time. The podcast examines their most innovative business principles and how those shaped their work and lives.
- On Apple Podcasts

**THE SCHOOL OF GREATNESS**
In this podcast, author Lewis Howes shares inspiring interviews from the most successful people on the planet. These are world-renowned leaders in business, entertainment, sports, science, health, and literature who will inspire you to unlock your inner greatness and live your best life.
- On Apple Podcasts

**VISHNU KI SECRET LIFE**
In this podcast, you'll learn something new about nutrition, fitness, life or lifestyle choices, from Vishnu's own experiences and sometimes, his questionable decisions.
- On Spotify

**THE BIG SHOTS - DOSA KING**
This thrilling Spotify Original podcast by Sikhya Entertainment, offers an epic drama about the exponential rise of P Rajagopal, the founder of Saravana Bhavan, and the shocking scandal that led to his fall.
- On Spotify

**LETS NOT MEET: A TRUE HORROR PODCAST**
The podcast offers true horror stories written by those that made it out alive. Those narrated are first person accounts and these are an anthology of terror and suspense. It's produced by martial artist.
- On Apple Podcasts

# POPULAR ON YOUTUBE

**SAARATHI**
Rukmini is forcefully taken hostage by her enemy, Pratap, who wants to marry her. When Raja, her lover and a rickshaw driver by profession, finds out, he sets out for her hometown to rescue her.
Cast: Darshan, Deepa Sannidhi, R Sarathkumar

**HUDUGARU**
Prabhu, Chandru and Siddesh aspire to have a government job and try to lead a simple lifestyle. But their lives change dramatically when they attempt to unite two lovers.
Cast: Puneeth Rajkumar, Yogesh, Srinagar Kitty

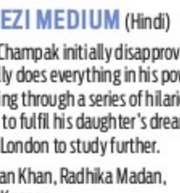
**HUBLI**
A man, who is a terror to antisocial elements, loses his memory. He is chased by a policeman, who regards him as a terrorist.
Cast: Sudeep, Rakshita

**THAMIZH**
Thamizh, a brave youth, looks forward to working with his brother in Kuwait. Meanwhile, circumstances force him to clash with some gangsters which earn him Periyavar's wrath.
- Cast: Prashanth and Simran

Scan this QR code to find out how your favourite celebs are coping with the lockdown.

# WHAT'S ON TED TALKS

**1 FRACTALS AND THE ART OF ROUGHNESS BY BENOIT MANDELBROT**
At TED2010, mathematics legend Benoit Mandelbrot develops a theme he first discussed at TED in 1984 — the extreme complexity of roughness and the way that fractal math can find order within patterns that seem unknowably complicated.



**2 MYSTERIES OF VERNACULAR: UKULELE BY JESSICA ORECK AND RACHAEL TEEL**
When 19th century Portuguese travelers landed in Hawaii with a small four-stringed guitar, a member of the king's court, nicknamed Jumping Flea, or ukulele in Hawaiian, took to the instrument. Jessica Oreck and Rachael Teel explain how an affinity for the ukulele gave the instrument its name.

**3 A PATH TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT FOR REFUGEES BY CHRYSTINA RUSSELL**
Out of the more than 70 million displaced people worldwide, only three percent have access to higher education. The Global Education Movement is on a mission to change that with the first large-scale initiative of its kind to help refugee learners get bachelor's degrees.



**4 THE POST-CRISIS CONSUMER BY JOHN GERZEMA**
John Gerzema says there's an upside to the recent financial crisis — the opportunity for positive change. In this talk, he identifies four major cultural shifts driving new consumer behavior and shows how businesses are evolving to connect with thoughtful spending.

**5 AN INNOVATIVE WAY TO SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS BY BILLY SAMUEL MWAPE**
After his son was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, Billy Samuel Mwape realized that his project management skills might be put to use to support his child's special needs.

# NOW STREAMING

## REGIONAL

**AVANE SRIMANNARAYANA** (Kannada)
In pursuit of solving a long-held mystery of Amaravati, Narayana - the quirky new cop in the town - has to get past a dreaded clan of dacoits and its fierce leader Jairam.
Cast: Rakshit Shetty, Shanvi Srivastava, Achyuth Kumar
- Watch on: Amazon Prime Registration: ₹129 per month

**OUT OF LOVE** (Hindi, series)
Meera (Rasika) begins to suspect every female associate of Akarsh(Purab), her husband after she found a stray hair which is not hers. After discussing with her friend, she thought she might be over reactive but does not stop digging up for finding the evidence.
Cast: Harsh Chhaya, Rasika Dugal, Sanghmitra Hitaishi
- Watch on: Disney + Hotstar



**BIRBAL TRILOGY** (KANNADA)
A wrongly accused murderer who is helped by Advocate Mahesh Das despite of various threats faced by them during the investigation.
Cast: M. G. Srinivas, Suresh Heblikar, Rukmini Vasanth
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

**RANAM** (Malayalam)
Trapped in a life of crime, a mysterious getaway driver, lives with this code of conduct and protects his only friend. When he meets someone who can potentially change his entire world, he yearns at a chance for redemption.
Cast: Prithviraj Sukumaran, Rahman, Gilju John
- Watch on: Disney + Hotstar

**BOMBHAAT** (Telugu)
A tale of twisted love with sparks of Sci-Fi and a deadly plot of vengeance. A young engineer battling his comedic misfortune gets entangled in an epic revenge story between his God Father and the Mad Scientist chasing a powerful formula
Cast: Sai Sushanth Reddy, Simran Chowdary, Chandini Chowdary
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

*All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.*

**ANGREZI MEDIUM** (Hindi)
Though Champak initially disapproves, he eventually does everything in his power while going through a series of hilarious mishaps to fulfil his daughter's dream of going to London to study further.
Cast: Irrfan Khan, Radhika Madan, Kareena Kapoor
- Watch on: Disney + Hotstar

**DURGAMATI: THE MYTH** (Hindi)
A bureaucrat is imprisoned in a haunted house for interrogation. However, things take an unexpected turn when she gets possessed by a spirit.
Cast: Karan Kapadia, Mahie Gill, Bhumi Pednekar
- Watch on Amazon Prime

## FOREIGN

**THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS** (English)
Chris Gardner takes up an unpaid internship in a brokerage firm after he loses his life's earnings selling a product he invested in. His wife leaves him and he is left with the custody of his son.
Cast: Will Smith, Thandie Newton, Jaden Smith
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

**SYLVIE'S LOVE** (English)
A woman working at her father's record store in Harlem in the late 1950s meets an aspiring saxophone player.
Cast: Tessa Thompson, Nnamdi Asomugha, Eva Longoria
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

**BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY** (English)
Cast: Rami Malek, Lucy Boynton, Gwilym Lee
With his impeccable vocal abilities, Freddie Mercury and his rock band, Queen, achieve superstardom. However, amidst his skyrocketing success, he grapples with his ego, sexuality and a fatal illness.
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

**THE MIDNIGHT SKY** (English)
This post-apocalyptic tale follows Augustine, a lonely scientist in the Arctic, as he races to stop Sully and her fellow astronauts from returning home to a mysterious global catastrophe.
Cast: George Clooney, Felicity Jones, David Oyelowo
- Watch on: Netflix

**SUBSCRIPTION**
**Netflix:** ₹ 199 per month
**Amazon Prime:** ₹ 129 per month
**Disney+Hotstar:** ₹ 399 per year

# *MadhaGaja* is the latest Kannada film to get Telugu version

**A Telugu teaser of the Srimurali-starrer will be revealed by a superstar on Jan. 1**

CE FEATURES

Telugu seems to have become a sought-after language for Kannada movie makers, with several production houses getting their film dubbed and released in Tollywood. Now, the Sri Murali-starrer *MadhaGaja* will be the latest Sandalwood movie to get a Telugu version. "Happy to announce the next step of *MADHAGAJA* ...Bless us! (sic)," the production house, Umapathy Films, tweeted on Christmas eve. The film's Telugu teaser will be released on Jan. 1 by Anand Audio, and buzz is that a top superstar from Tollywood will unveil it. The film, directed by Mahesh Kumar, is nearing completion, and the team plans to wrap the shoot by January-end. *MadhaGaja* consists of an ensemble cast, including Ashika Ranganath in the female lead role. The movie also features Jagapathi Babu playing the antagonist, while Tamil actor Devayani is making a comeback on the silver screen in an important role in this film. It has music by Ravi Basrur, and cinematography by Naveen Kumar.

Sriimurali

# Bharath, the director of *Kanti* and *Saheba*, passes away

CE FEATURES

Bharath, the director of super hit Kannada film *Kanti*, which starred Sriimurali and Ramya, breathed his last on Thursday night. He was suffering from kidney related ailments over the last few months and died due to kidney failure.

Ravichandran's son actor Manoranjan, who made his debut with Bharath's directorial *Saheba,* mourned the director's demise. In a post on Instagram, the actor said, "Dearest Bharath, You were a pillar of strength in my life. My support system. A debut that gave me an opportunity to be a son to many families. You made me be a part of this dream called films. I can never believe that you've left us brother. Too soon brother. Too soon. Rest in peace brother." (sic)

# DIRECTOR MG SRINIVAS BRINGS VETERAN ACTOR RAJESH ON BOARD *OLD MONK*

**The 88-year old artiste will be seen on the silver screen after almost a decade**

Rajesh

A SHARADHAA

MG Srinivas, the director and lead actor of *Old Monk,* has brought on board a host of senior artistes as part of the cast. He has now signed up veteran actor Rajesh as well. The 88-year-old artiste, who was a part of the golden era of Sandalwood, having worked with stars such as Rajkumar, Kalyan Kumar and Udaykumar, will be seen on the silver screen after almost a decade. Srinivas feels lucky to direct an accomplished actor like Rajesh, and says his charm remains intact at this age too. "We were not sure if he wanted to get back to acting. However, we went ahead and approached him as he fit the bill. Thankfully, he gave a nod after he learned about his characterisation. He also mentioned that he is getting back to acting after a hiatus, and is excited about his role and about facing the camera after such a long time," says Srinivas, who plans to start shooting Rajesh's portions from Jan. 15. The team is left with five days of talkie portions and a song to shoot, which they plan to wrap by January.

The film features Aditi Prabhudeva in the female lead role, while Malayalam actor Sudev Nair, who is making his Kannada film debut, will be seen as an antagonist. The cast of Old Monk also comprises Aruna Balaraj, and senior actors like S Narayan, Sihi Kahi Chandru, RT Rama, Dingri Nagaraj and Bengaluru Nagesh. The film, coming from the director of *Topiwala, Srinivasa Kalyana,* and *Birbal Trilogy: Case No 1,* is a romantic drama based on a mythological character called Bal Brahmachari. It will narrate the love story of a bachelor and a gossip-monger. Saurabh Vaibhav and Bharath Parashuram are handling the music and cinematography, respectively.

MG Srinivas

# Gal Gadot shines in a MIDDLING SEQUEL

KIRUBHAKAR PURUSHOTHAMAN

When *Wonder Woman* came out in 2017, director Patty Jenkins and Gal Gadot had the huge responsibility of reviving the slumping DC Extended Universe. They were quite successful in doing so and brought about a refreshing change to the gloomy universe. The stakes were also high in the film's plot: the Amazonian goddess had to help stop World War I and the annihilation of the human race. Fast forward to 2020, the stakes are much higher for *Wonder Woman 1984,* and its responsibility goes beyond the realm of DCEU. The film must now help in reviving the entire movie business that is yet to recover from the Covid shock. Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman does all the heavy lifting here (sometimes, literally), but the banality of the plot and unexciting not-so-supervillains make the prospects of Patty Jenkins and Gal Gadot striking gold not so promising.

However, *Wonder Woman 1984* does have some good chops like the film's opening and best action sequence. We are back in Themyscira, where young Diana is competing with her fellow Amazonians, who are much older than her. The breathtaking visuals coupled with Hans Zimmer's score remind us why we enjoy watching movies in theatres. The Amazonians are no match for Diana; she is far ahead of them in the race. But, she is forced to take a shortcut that makes her aunt Antiope disqualify her from the competition. The sequence ends with a lecture — Diana is told to accept the truth even if it's painful. Undoubtedly, a brilliant prologue/set up to the moral conflict the superhero is about to face.

Later in 1984, Diana Prince is an archaeologist in the Smithsonian museum, Washington DC. She hasn't moved on from her only love Steve Trevor (Chris Pine) and refuses to have a social life. But for some reason, she befriends the demure and socially-awkward new colleague Barbara Minerva (Kristen Wigg). While Diana yearns for her lost love, Barbara yearns to be Diana. So, when a magical stone that grants wishes arrives in the museum, both ask for what they dearly miss. But the catch here is that the stone grants you things at the cost of something you have. The good ol' monkey's paw business. So, when the archetypal greedy villain, Maxwell Lord (Pedro Pascal), lays his hands on the stone, it brings doom, and Diana has to save the world at the cost of the one thing she wants in life.

RATING 2.5/5

Of the three of the arcs, I liked the journey of Barbara best because there is more of showing than telling with her arc. She goes from being this meek gemologist to the 'apex predator'. We get to witness the gradual shift in her demeanour and outfits. Also, she has the strongest and most human motive among the three: envy.

With Diana and Steve Trevor, we don't get anything that we haven't seen before in Wonder Woman (2017). Yes, it was interesting to see how the tables have turned. Back then, Steve took her on a tour showing around the world, which the Amazonians were isolated from. Now, it's the heroine's turn to show this man from the past the modern civilization and its absurdities. Except for a few good moments, there was little to get out of this romance. And there is no doubt that Pedro Pascal's Maxwell Lord has the most underwhelming arc. Although his wish is in equal parts intriguing and natural, Patty Jenkins fails to exploit this potential. In the end, he turns out to be nothing more than a stereotype.

Martin Scorsese might have been right when he said 'nothing is at risk' in superhero movies and they seem to be 'closer to theme parks'. We know Wonder Woman is going to save the day and there will be no surprise on that account. What we seek is the illusion of fear during the roller coaster ride with complete awareness that we are going home in one piece. That's an illusion that *Wonder Woman 1984* unfortunately fails to deliver.

**WONDER WOMAN 1984**

**Cast:** Gal Gadot, Chris Pine, Kristen Wiig, Pedro Pascal

**Director:** Patty Jenkins

# A JUVENILE BIOPIC OF AN ADULT STAR

SHILAJIT MITRA

THE concept of a silver jubilee film is almost quaint now. There was a time, however, when even B-grade releases ran for months in theatres. At least a hundred of those films belonged to Shakeela Khan, one of the biggest softcore stars of the South, someone whose films ruled the box-office and were dubbed in multiple foreign languages. She was also widely derided, hounded by the press and the public, and has since lived in relative obscurity.

Shakeela's journey from a young schoolgirl in Varkala, Kerala to becoming a controversial film star is captured in Indrajit Lankesh's eponymous biopic. The film is closely modelled on Milan Luthria's The Dirty Picture, which traced the equally turbulent rise of Silk Smitha (Silk appears as a character here). There's also a whiff of Shyam Benegal's *Bhumika* — the story of a fatherless starlet turning to film to draw her family out of poverty. Beyond that, though, the film's cinematic merits are scant, despite an engaging turn by Richa Chadha as Shakeela.

A major problem is the way the film looks at its own subject matter. You'd expect a biopic of a celebrated adult star to present a nuanced view of the industry she thrived in. A sense of that is established when we see protesters burning effigies and demanding a ban on Shakeela's movies. As the film progresses, though, it succumbs to the same moralising it claims to criticise. Shakeela herself does this, deeming her own films vulgar and cheap, and wishing to revive herself as a family-friendly star.

The low-budget adult cinema of the 1990s was undoubtedly sexist and deeply exploitative. Shakeela, while highlighting these realities, also begins to judge porn as inherently immoral. It's a bit strange of the makers to claim to celebrate Shakeela's journey while also discrediting her life's work. When a link is drawn between her rising popularity and instances of rape and sexual violence in the state, the film doesn't stop to investigate such a logic. Instead, it quickly turns it into a revenge ploy on the part of Salim (Pankaj Tripathi), a fictionalised Malayalam cinema star whose advances Shakeela declines.

Pankaj, in velvet suits and stroking a saggy moustache, bumbles around as a peevish superstar. Cinematographer Santosh Rai opts for a highly contemporised look, eschewing the scuffed-up feel of old Shakeela films. The same, though, cannot be said of the narrative — which is so contrived and haphazard as to take us directly back to the era.

RATING 2/5

**SHAKEELA**

**Cast:** Richa Chadha, Pankaj Tripathi, Kajol Chugh, Rajeev Pillai

**Directed by:** Indrajit Lankesh

# Anil Kapoor, Anurag Kashyap throw down in a fun thriller

**AK VS AK**

**Cast:** Anurag Kashyap, Anil Kapoor, Sonam Kapoor, Harshvardhan Kapoor

**Directed by:** Vikramaditya Motwane

**Streaming on:** Netflix

SHILAJIT MITRA

As many are aware, Anurag Kashyap and Anil Kapoor have a long history. In 2003, they were meant to work together on Allwyn Kalicharan, a one-of-its-kind dystopian thriller set in Delhi. An intriguing poster had gone out — and still keeps popping up in cinephile circles. But the actual film never got made, with Anurag blaming Anil for thwarting the project. "I suffered a lot because of Anil Kapoor," he said in a 2007 interview, "and I will not forget it."

Forget it he has not — at least on screen. In Vikramaditya Motwane's meta-fictional thriller, *AK vs AK,* Anurag and Anil turn up as zanier versions of themselves. Anurag, attending a talk with Anil, reminds the 64-year-old actor that his time has passed. "He's still trying to be a hero," he tells a laughing crowd. Hearing this, Anil flips on his shades — always a sign of trouble — and drops water on Anurag's shoes. Angered, the director unloads an entire glass on Anil's face.

That final splash is important. Without it, this would just be a film about two Bollywood dads edging out on Netflix — a dark and geeky encore to last month's The Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives. That's the thing about the mockumentary format: unless you really dial it up, the fakeness starts to show. A little later, Anurag follows Anil into his van to pitch a film. He tells him that he has kidnapped his daughter Sonam Kapoor. With the clock ticking, Anil must find her by sunup or bring her harm. A camera would follow him around wherever he goes; he can't involve cops or any outsider. "Sab kuch real hoga (Everything will be real)," Anurag explains, unleashing his brand of cinema on an actor who once snubbed him.

For fans of both AKs, there's much to chew on. Anil's older hits — Ram Lakhan, Tezaab, Mr. India, Nayak — are frequently brought up. At a police station he has hurried to (despite clear instructions otherwise), a cop tells him he has seen Woh Saat Din 'seven times'. The same cop then turns around and identifies Anurag as Madhur Bhandarkar. These in-jokes earn a chuckle or two, though Vikram isn't shy to poke into other directions: a line about Anurag's assistant graduating to girlfriend status is surprisingly tart in such a free-flowing film.

The setting of Christmas Eve — which is Anil's real birthday, and the day of this film's release — adds extra urgency to the chase. Having given in to Anurag's ploy, Anil drops by for his birthday dinner at home. This is the bulk of the cameos you'll get. Boney Kapoor talking exclusively in remakes is hilarious, though the 3-minute drive-by by Harshvardhan Kapoor wont interest most ("Motwane f*#ked me with Bhavesh," he shouts as he's shoved out the door).

It's also where I began wondering if *AK vs AK* has more to offer than celebrity tidbits. Thankfully, with the visit to the Kapoor household out of the way, the film gets down to business. Anil smacks Anurag across the face; the two throw down against a Christmas tree, a jar breaks. Blood seeps out of Anurag's nose and cheeks. Anil chokes him with fairy lights, squeezing the breath out of him till he breaks into a convulsive laugh. It's strange to close out 2020 with such an improbable action scene — yet it actually helps sell the conflict, with neither party holding back.

RATING 3/5

In an interview with Cinema Express, Vikram admitted this was essentially a fun project for him. Even so, it bears his signature touch. There's a show-stopping chase sequence across multiple locations that recalls his work on Bhavesh Joshi Superhero (that it's Anil, and not his son, pacing in and out of trains offers a weird sense of cinematic déjà vu). The grainy, found-footage aesthetic is disorienting at first, but it complements the later scenes, as Anil rushes across town to find his daughter.

As a satire, the film isn't caustic in its view of the industry. Anurag grumbles about how Indian audiences are obsessed with stars, but it's a happy sort of grumble, not the sardonic digs he packs into his own films. Once an outsider in Bollywood, the director is shown revered and welcomed by all. Similarly, the references to Anil's films are not idly made — there's genuine awe and enthusiasm underlining Avinash Sampath's screenplay.

It all comes alive in one scene. Anil, unable to nab the cab driver who'd picked up Sonam, turns back to a Christmas carnival near a chawl. *AK vs AK* doesn't break ground in cinematic invention. There are narrative gaps you'll be willing to forgive, others not so much. It does, however, offer a nugget about filmmaking itself. "Who is more important — an actor or director?" someone asks at the start. The true answer is revealed later on, with Anil limping away from an accident and Anurag asking his camerawoman, "Did you get the shot?"

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